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Fred Barnes Goes Camping With the Contras

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

SPRINGTIME FOR WALDHEIM

The Secretary-General's Nazi Past

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CORRESPONDENCE

NOT WELLES-WRITTEN

To the editors:

John Lahr's otherwise excellent assessment of new books about Orson Welles ("The Wonder Boy," March 17) is marred in only one respect. In discussing Robert L. Carringer's study of *Citizen Kane*, Lahr takes at face value Carringer's statement, wholly unsupported by any evidence, that Welles somehow "took over" the script of the movie on some mythical third draft, "deepening characters and structure" and adding, among other things, the famous breakfast scene and the newspaper montage. Unfortunately for this posthumous claim for Welles's authorship, there is no evidence of any kind to support it. There is not one scrap of paper on which a word of script written or claimed to have been written by Welles exists, and his secretaries and those who worked with him have stated on more than one occasion that he never wrote a word. He didn't need to, of course, since the whole movie is his "creation," and no credit should be taken from him for all that he accomplished. But he didn't *write* it, no, not one word. It was an original screenplay of my father, Herman J. Mankiewicz, and no one seriously disputes that, except (I am sure) from the grave.

FRANK MANKIEWICZ
Washington, D.C.

HAITI'S HOT HISTORY

To the editors:

In David S. Landes's article on the history of Haiti ("Slaves and Slaughter," March 10), he refers to the "benevolent occupation" of Haiti by the United States. The "American presence," he suggests, represents the "only period of relative tranquillity" in the long history of the country. Haitian scholars have an altogether different portrayal of the occupation, which began in 1915 and ended in 1934. In *Les Blancs Debarquent*, Roger Gaillard, the leading student of the subject, has magisterially detailed the circumstances of the occupation. The U.S. Marines, aided by a local police force, set out to disarm a rural population that had kept its weapons since the days of the revolution. It seems that many of the American servicemen had been recruited from the Southern states on the absurd notion that Southerners were "better equipped to deal with Negroes." Invoking a law ratified in 1916 by the U.S. Senate, the occupying force resurrected the dreaded *corvée*—the involuntary conscription of labor crews.

The roundup by U.S. Marines of several thousand men did not sit well with Haitian memories of white domination, and led to the "Cacos Insurrection," which soon found a latter-day Toussaint l'Ouverture in Charlemagne Péralte. The Cacos, venerated by some and vilified by others, were massed north of the Artibonite River. They held the Marines at bay until Péralte's assassination in November 1919. Ten months later, the rebellion was over. According to Haitian historians, the cost had been dear: 13,000 dead by Gaillard's count.

PAUL FARMER
Harvard Medical School
Boston, Massachusetts

NO SOCIETY, NO CRITICS

To the editors:

I am awed at the confidence with which Denis Donoghue's intemperate survey of feminist criticism differentiates "literary merit" from "sociological interest" ("A Criticism of One's Own," March 10). Few writers—male or female, major or minor—have ignored, with Professor Donoghue's assurance, the fact that we all make our lives in society, and that without its polite inequities, its codes of power and exclusion, there would be no books and no critics, for there would be very little to write about.

NINA AUERBACH
Department of English
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia

ANTI-SUBURBAN SNOBBERY

To the editors:

In J. Anthony Lukas's review of the books about suburbia by William Geist and Kenneth Jackson ("The Hissing of Summer Lawns," March 10), he never says explicitly what he thinks of suburban life, but it is not hard to infer his disapproval. Lukas appears to be amused by Geist's stories of Tupperware saleswomen and

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Debating Rules

Suppose I were to send President Reagan a letter (cc: Pat Buchanan) urging that he launch an immediate American invasion of the Soviet Union. I would argue that unless such drastic action is taken, the Russian people undoubtedly will live under the heel of Communist oppression for years if not decades. (As Jeane Kirkpatrick points out, no totalitarian regime has ever reformed itself from within.) I might note further that Soviet leaders strongly oppose this idea. "You know where I stand, Mr. President," I would conclude. "Now you must decide where you stand."

Reagan, being a polite fellow, might write me back. He might say that though he sincerely shares my distaste for the Soviet Union, he cannot endorse my plan to invade it, offering a few fairly obvious reasons. Would I then be justified in declaring that President Reagan—whatever his reasons—had "sided with the Soviet Union"? That he had become "co-guarantor with Moscow" of totalitarian oppression? That he "stands with the Communists" because "the consequence of his position, however unintended," is to make life easier for the oppressive and expansionist Soviet regime?

All the above quotations are close paraphrases of things Reagan, his communications director Pat Buchanan, and their journalistic defenders have said about their opponents in the debate over aid to the *contras*. The opponents have accused the Reaganites of "McCarthyism" and Reagan's defenders have charged the opponents with flinging this charge in order to blur a "self-evidently accurate" presentation of the stark choice at hand.

Before the Nicaragua debate proceeds any further, we need some clear rules about what is, and is not, a McCarthyite smear. The purpose of such rules isn't to make the political dialogue more genteel. Goodness knows, there's far too much huffing and puffing about "irresponsibility" already. Better a Pat Buchanan, who puts his cards on the table, than a Senator Jim Sasser, who (in the Democratic response to Reagan's March 16 TV address) says he opposes aid to the *contras* because it may reduce the funds available for guaranteed student loans.

Like any good rules, though, a few neutral and accepted rules of political debate can be liberating, not confining, by making it clear how far you can go before you've gone too far. No American has to worry seriously these days about being arrested or blacklisted for his or her opinions. The problem with "McCarthyism" and the problem with careless charges of McCarthyism are exactly the same. They are tactics of intimidation and confusion. Rather than advancing the debate, they squelch or distract it.

For this very reason, the charge that opponents of aid to the *contras* are "objectively" serving the interests of the Sandinistas, whatever their professed or actual motives, strikes me as an authentic McCarthyite smear. In some trivial sense, the point may even be true. It will be better for the Sandinistas if the *contras* don't get $100 million from the United States than if they do. President Reagan supports American aid, Daniel Ortega doesn't. So what? It will be better for the Soviet Union if we don't invade tomorrow. That doesn't answer the question of whether such an invasion would be good for America. This point doesn't even address that question in any serious way. The only purpose of raising it, therefore, is to poison the atmosphere and intimidate the other side. That's McCarthyism.

Joe McCarthy didn't invent this style of argument. When Norman Podhoretz writes that "in a conflict where the only choice is between communists and anticommunists, anyone who refuses to help the anticommunists is agreeing to help the communists, whether or not he wishes to do so," he is borrowing a standard device of the communists themselves in the ideological wars of the 1930s. They argued that anyone who dared to criticize the Soviet Union was "objectively" pro-fascist. (After all, criticism of the Soviet Union would be pleasing to the Soviet Union's enemies. The fascist nations—for the moment—were the Soviet Union's enemies. Q.E.D.) Even George Orwell once fell into the trap. Temporarily flush with nationalist enthusiasm near the start of World War II, he wrote, in an essay on pacifism, that, "objectively, the pacifist is pro-Nazi." He later denounced the "objectively" formulation, writing that to "disregard people's motives" is "dishonest" and conducive to an "atmosphere of hatred."

Obviously it's valid argument, and not McCarthyism, to point out the logical implications and probable consequences of people's beliefs. Any Briton tempted by pacifism during World War II needed a sharp reminder that if his views took hold in the general population, this triumph would be short-lived. But discussion of the probable consequences of various policies—which is what the Nicaragua debate ought to be about—is exactly what the "objectively pro-Sandinista" formulation attempts to prevent. By its logic, the most extreme option on the table automatically carries the day, since this is the one the Sandinistas presumably would favor the least.

"Guilt by association" is also not necessarily a McCarthyite smear. The organizations a person belongs to are a perfectly good indication of that person's capacity for judgment and truth. *"Bad company is a disease. / Who lies with dogs shall rise with fleas."* It becomes a smear when you take people's connections as irrefutable disproof of anything they say, or when you try to tar a person or an argument with the mere fact that undesirable sorts are in agreement. (E.g., "The Democratic and Communist parties both favor legalized abortion.")

Podhoretz is right that accusations of McCarthyism can be just as irresponsible as accusations of communism. A Nexis data-base search (124 citations of "McCarthyism" and "McCarthyite" in leading newspapers and magazines during the past year) revealed that one British politician recently accused another of a "scurrilous McCarthyite smear campaign" merely for calling the first one a "snivelling little git."

But the essence of McCarthyism isn't, as Podhoretz would have it, simply *false* accusations of communism. It's the impugning of motives, the poisoning of goodwill, the twisting of evidence (such as citing an eight-month-old poll about Latin American support for your policies when you know a more recent poll contradicts it), the purposeful subversion of rational argument, the creation of an atmosphere of paranoia. All this can be accomplished without telling a single literal lie.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
APRIL 7, 1986

THE PHILIPPINE COROLLARY

Now it is official. The Reagan Doctrine has a Philippine corollary. The Reagan Doctrine, enunciated a year ago, pledges American support to anticommunist guerrillas "on every continent from Afghanistan to Nicaragua." It is an original response to a historically new situation: armed guerrilla resistance in the far provinces of an overextended Soviet empire. President Reagan's March 14 message to Congress on regional conflicts amplifies the doctrine. And it adds a corollary pledging to "oppose tyranny in whatever form, whether of the left or the right." The struggle for democracy, it seems, is to be supported not only in Communist countries but also in right-wing dictatorships. Better late than never.

Is the administration just cashing in on the rush of developments in the Philippines and Haiti? Perhaps. But the outlines of the Philippine corollary began to take shape years ago. The Philippine corollary might even be called the Salvador corollary, because the real model for supporting the push toward democracy in our sphere is not the Philippines or Haiti, but El Salvador. The administration initially found itself faced with the choice between a shaky coalition of a violent and corrupt military, assorted terrorists (led by the likes of Roberto d'Aubuisson), and centrist political parties on the one hand, and a nebulous coalition of avowed Leninist guerrillas and left-wing democratic parties on the other. Prodded and pushed by strong Democratic opposition to its Salvador policy, the administration acquiesced to a consensus position of trying to build and support a political center around reformist military officers and Napoleón Duarte. That "third force" strategy (which TNR has been advocating in El Salvador for over five years) has thus far succeeded in curbing—though not eliminating—the military death squads and creating a political opening in which democrats of all sorts can operate.

The administration has not always been so enthusiastic about a third force. It was originally apprehensive, given the catastrophes that befell both our interests and those of the people of Iran and Nicaragua in 1979. In Iran the belated sighting of a third force proved a mirage. In Nicaragua a democratic third force existed, but its center was quickly overwhelmed by the disciplined Leninists with whom it had entered into a short-lived alliance. What El Salvador and the Philippines have shown us is that, if there is a domestic base (or, in the case of Haiti, if there is no totalitarian challenge), a third force strategy can create a democratic alternative rather than chaos or a communist victory.

Some have interpreted the March 14 document as Reagan's acceptance of the Carter human rights policy. There is one important similarity. The administration now belatedly acknowledges that dictatorships, no matter how "friendly," do not serve our long-term interests. The administration that toasted Ferdinand Marcos's "adherence to democratic principles" and embraced the Argentine military officers since convicted of war crimes has come to understand that simple enthusiasm for a pro-American government may be hazardous to democracy's health.

But a third force strategy differs from a human rights policy in two major respects. First, it is political. A human rights policy restricted to admonition of and sanctions against anticommunist and pro-American human rights violators risks becoming what Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan once called "international social work." It can help individuals, and to the extent that it does so, it is a policy that deserves to be carried out. But it is political only in that it identifies the United States with the victims of repression. As the Philippines experience shows, this identification can be invaluable. But without a larger political goal, "human rights" is not quite a strategy. The premise of third force strategy is that, in the end, the best guarantor for human rights is democracy. The most effective and sweeping way to help political prisoners in the Philippines, it turned out, was to help Corazon Aquino to power. The March 14 document says that the Philippine case is the rule, not an exception.

A second difference is that a third force strategy presupposes and demands the existence of a democratic alternative with a reasonable chance of achieving power. In the absence of that, a "human rights" policy that merely undermines an autocrat doesn't necessarily do anything to improve human rights.

That's why national security adviser John Poindexter took pains to point out that the Reagan document was really talking about promoting democracy in three kinds of situations: countries ruled by communists, those ruled by

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autocrats where there is a democratic alternative, and those ruled by autocrats where there is no such alternative. In the first case, the Reagan Doctrine is operative: these regimes can and will be dislodged only by force of arms. In the second case, the third force strategy applies: we should be pushing for a replacement of the autocrat with a democratic alternative. But in the third case, the old and prematurely buried Kirkpatrick doctrine applies: we should choose to stick with our SOB rather than risk the deluge. Poindexter did not say it, but it is worth emphasizing that when we are consigned to doing this, we should not lavish rhetorical excess on the regime as, for example, Jimmy Carter did with the shah.

The Philippine corollary is a difficult and delicate policy, and some may regret its enunciation. First, it involves upsetting apple carts that are basically our apple carts. This has to be done with prudence and care, with a reasonable assurance that in the end a more democratic regime will triumph. In some countries there is clearly no alternative to the existing regime. China falls into that category, as do the one-party states in sub-Saharan Africa and the dictatorships of the Arab world. It is absurd, for example, to make the transformation of Saudi Arabia into a multiparty democracy an object of American policy.

Second, the promotion of democracy is a large responsibility. In many ways, it requires the U.S. to engage in the difficult work of decolonization. We do, however, have the experience of previous decolonizers to learn from. The establishment of paper constitutions can do little in societies where the social and political structures of democracy have not been developed. Thus, in some countries, the project is more long-term, more institutional than constitutional. But it does not mean that our work should not begin, especially in cases such as South Korea, where a viable democratic opposition is beginning to take shape.

THE Philippine corollary is what made the March 14 statement newsworthy. But the third force strategy occupies a very small part of the document, the bulk of which is given over to a vigorous defense of the classical Reagan Doctrine: supporting anticommunist insurgencies in Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Angola, and Cambodia. The timing of this document is no accident. It is clearly meant to bolster the administration's case for aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*, by putting that policy in the context of a global strategy of promoting democracy throughout the world. Indeed, support for the *contras* is the centerpiece of the Reagan Doctrine. Were that resistance—the most geopolitically important for the United States—to be liquidated, the doctrine would ring hollow indeed. Since the character of that resistance is at best ambiguous, an early application of the doctrine should be to strengthen the democratic elements in the *contra* forces, both as a practical measure and as earnest expression of hopes and intentions. All this notwithstanding, the liberation of Angola, Afghanistan, and Cambodia would not have one-tenth the geopolitical importance—and psychological importance for other oppressed democrats—that the replacement of the Sandinista regime with a democratic government in Managua would have.

But the timing does not make the Reagan Doctrine a fig leaf for *contra* aid any more than the Truman Doctrine was a pretext for aid to Turkey and Greece. Although occasioned by the need for that aid, the Truman Doctrine was meant to have global application. It held that the central focus of American foreign policy was resistance to post-World War II Soviet advances and the promotion of democratic polities as the centerpiece of that resistance. The Reagan Doctrine is a response to post-Vietnam Soviet advances. It is thus heir to the liberal internationalism of the postwar era, as enunciated in the Truman Doctrine and as understood through Kennedy until the Vietnam War. The March 14 document presents a reprise of that vision: a neo-internationalist, ideologically based foreign policy, resting on the premise that the promotion of democracy satisfies both American interests and values.

Such an ideologically based policy has come under attack from two camps. Henry Kissinger recently gave the "realist" critique in his syndicated monthly column. He warned of the dangers of trying to act as the world's democratic policeman and of not thinking of national security first, and of the laudable but idealistic goal of worldwide democracy second. But in fact, in most cases, the best guarantor of Western security is the promotion and support of democratic polities. They are our natural organic allies, unlike dictatorships (such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Somalia), which are prone to changing allegiances overnight. The dramatic and overwhelming pro-NATO vote in Spain is only further confirmation that in democratic institutions lies the best hope for a strong anti-Soviet alliance. The crucial point is that the security interests of the West and the ideological commitment to freedom and democracy are not contradictory.

The other critique is "idealist." It too seeks to promote democracy, but only in places where it can be done without bloodshed, as in Haiti and the Philippines. Where the local dictator asks the U.S. Air Force for a getaway plane—fine. This idealism doubts—sometimes with some good reasons, sometimes not—the efficacy of resorting to armed force. In an impure world, though, there is sometimes no alternative. Too much idealism restricts the United States to promoting democracy by using only the most passive means: criticism, withdrawal of support, withholding of aid. Means of omission. In practice that means affecting only the more malleable and thus generally more benign dictatorships. It means that democratic revolution wins our support everywhere except where most needed, against Soviet-backed Leninists.

The March 14 document has more universal aspirations. We share them. But aspirations are not enough. We have our differences with some of its applications. Cambodia should not automatically be included in the Reagan Doctrine, since "our side" is dominated by the genocidal Khmer Rouge, and such an insurgency, whatever minimal geopolitical benefit it brings, can hardly be supported in the name of freedom. Ethiopia is also often and curiously

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included in the Reagan Doctrine, although that insurgency, which is separatist, has no ideological context whatsoever. The proof of that fact is that the insurgency was going on much as it is today when the country was ruled by Haile Selassie. There may be merit in supporting separatists in certain parts of the world, but it doesn't fall under the rubric of the defense of freedom, which is the rationale of the Reagan Doctrine.

Nor are aspirations enough in carrying out the Philippine corollary. It requires action, in places like Chile, for example. The U.S. has ostentatiously and correctly moved against the Pinochet regime in the U.N. Human Rights Commission. The impetus for the increased American pressure on Pinochet is very clearly the fact that the democratic opposition, though still fragile, has begun to get its act together. Brokered by the Catholic Church, it managed last August to produce a "national accord" signed by parties representing 80 percent of the Chilean electorate. That is the kind of signal that American diplomacy needs and must quickly exploit if a third force strategy is to succeed. The pressure on Pinochet must be kept up. We'll be watching the American vote on this year's World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank loans to the regime.

President Reagan has now proclaimed a devotion to democracy that is universal. We interrupt our applause only to note that the administration will now be held to its own standard.

NOTEBOOK

□ THE BEST NEWS from the French elections is the continued decline of the most Stalinist major Communist party in Western Europe. The PCF got less than ten percent of the vote, down from more than 25 percent a decade ago. The worst news is the rise of Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front, which now vies with the Communists for fourth place. The Front is an unabashed fascist party, jingoistic and racist. It will seat 33 deputies in the National Assembly. In local elections and in voting for the European Parliament, about one out of every ten French men and women has chosen the same fascist ticket. We can't help asking: Will this showing be the occasion for anguished meditations about the lost soul of France, like the widespread published meditations about the lost soul of Israel when the fascist demagogue Meir Kahane got one-and-a-half percent of the vote (and one seat in Parliament) in that country? Among other ugly similarities, the National Front also calls for the forced expulsion of Arabs. Flora Lewis, take it away.

□ IS SHE CRAZY, OR WHAT? The latest issue of the *Spotlight*, official publication of the Liberty Lobby, contains an article written by Senator Paula Hawkins of Florida, or at least with her byline. If Hawkins (who is up for reelection this year) is so dense that she had no idea what the Liberty Lobby is, the issue containing her article would enlighten her. Among other choice items (articles opposing the Genocide Treaty and the expulsion of Nazi war criminals), there are a couple of ads for "Liberty Library," a division of the Liberty Lobby. One offers a series of books about World War II: "For more than 40 years, the American people have been fed lie after lie to justify the unconscionable commitment of America's young men to die in Europe for the advancement of international communism and communism's major ally—international capitalism. Are you one of the few who can accept the truth about Anne Frank's 'diary'? What was the SS, and who did they fight?" And so on.

□ THE NEWSPAPER OF RECORD: ". . . And the good times—heralded by a new era of lower lending rates—seem here to stay awhile." (*New York Times*, March 16, business section, page one.)

". . . In the past few weeks, however, the doubts many economists harbored earlier have been resurrected by gloomy unemployment and production statistics, dismal trade figures, weak reports of retail sales. . . . 'Interest rates wouldn't be falling this way if the economy were as strong as some people say,' Mr. [Samuel] Nakagama said." (*New York Times*, March 17, page one.)

□ HISTORICAL NOTE: On page 30 we review two recent books on the Sacco and Vanzetti case. At the time of the two men's trial and execution in 1927, the editors at TNR tirelessly championed their cause. According to David Seideman, whose book on the history of THE NEW REPUBLIC will be published next month by Praeger, the magazine ran more than 40 editorials and two dozen articles about the case. Appeals for donations to Sacco and Vanzetti defense funds appeared regularly and, for $1,900, TNR took out a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*. Just before the execution, managing editor Bruce Bliven visited the inmates in their prison cell. According to Bliven, Vanzetti spoke eloquently, though with a heavy Italian accent, thanking TNR and its readers for their kindness. "When you are free," the condemned man told the editor as he was departing, "you will perhaps go back to Italy and drink again the lacrimae Christi?"

THE MONEY CULTURE

ANOTHER NEW DAWN

IS THE STOCK MARKET trying to tell us something? As I write this, the Dow Jones Industrial Average just finished the second week in March up 93 points, a record. Since the bull market began four-and-a-half years ago, the Dow has risen 131 percent. The market is supposed to be a leading indicator. So, if the market is up, it's telling us that the future for the economy is bright. Of course, the question is, How do you define "future"? Tomorrow? Over the

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next year? Over the next five years? On this subject, the market is a little vague. The Dow, for example, was hitting peaks in 1972 and 1973, and 12 months later the economy collapsed into one of the worst recessions in American history.

Nor can we tell exactly which piece of economic news the market is responding to—a problem that never seems to faze analysts. There are always explanations for the behavior of the market. The conventional wisdom about the recent 93-point advance was that investors had finally become convinced that inflation in the years ahead would be low (thanks in part to the drop in oil prices). Therefore interest rates would stay down, and the stock market would continue to rise. Debt-laden corporations would be able to reduce their borrowing costs (thus raising their profits), and debt-laden consumers would have more money to spend. Sound reasonable?

NOW, if the market had *fallen* 93 points, we would have had these explanations: investors are finally taking profits after the sustained bull market and the sharp recent run-ups. Or, investors are worried about the effect of falling oil prices on the Texas economy, which threatens Texas banks, which threatens all banks. Or, investors believe that interest rates, which have fallen fairly consistently for the past 18 months, are finally bottoming out and that, looking ahead, they can only see rates rising. Or, investors are beginning to sell stocks so they can pay taxes in April on the huge capital gains they chalked up in 1985. Et cetera.

But the market *is* trying to tell us something. Not so much about the direction of the economy or the prospects of the Democrats this November. Its message is much more interesting. It tells us how people behave—about their short memories, their herd instinct, and their greed.

There are two kinds of people in the world: the ones who buy stocks when the market is rising, and the ones who sell stocks when the market is rising. Both can make money in the stock market, but the ones who sell in up-markets (and buy in down-markets) almost always do better.

If you accept the premise that no one knows what the price of anything is going to be tomorrow, much less over a week or a month, then you begin to see the stock market as a huge lottery. Your number may come up, or it may not. You have no control over the choice. What you do have control over is the odds. The chances of heads coming up when you flip a quarter are one in two. But let's suppose that coin-flipping experts believe, erroneously, that this is going to be a great year for heads. The betting line on coin-flipping puts the odds on heads coming up at five in six, tails one in six. Since the actual chances of tails coming up are one in two, you should bet on tails.

In the same way, the odds on stocks (as reflected in their prices) change daily; sometimes they present good betting opportunities. Warren Buffett, the wise and successful Omaha investor who owns large chunks of ABC-Capital Cities, the Washington Post Company, and GEICO, uses a baseball analogy: As a stock-market investor, you can stand up at the plate all day and wait for your pitch. You can even take a lot of called strikes, and you won't be called out. You just wait, and when the fat one comes down the middle of the plate (or wherever you want it), you just swing.

Good odds, fat pitches, and excellent investments pop up all the time. But usually the best deals present themselves when the market is depressed, not when it's soaring. It's hard to find an investor who disagrees with this principle, but in times like these, it's also hard to find an investor who doesn't ignore it.

Investors also ignore the idea that the economy moves in cycles, that nothing is new, and that nothing lasts. Not long ago, we were being told that double-digit inflation was here to stay, that supplies of oil were running out and we would have to get used to $25-a-barrel prices forever, and that lenders would never give up their hard-earned money for long periods except at exorbitant rates of interest. ("The long-term bond market is dead" was a favorite expression in 1979 and 1980.) Today new epochs are at hand. On March 16 the headline of the *New York Times*'s lead business story was: "At the Dawn of an Era of Low Interest Rates." Inflation has been licked, we're told. Low oil prices are here to stay, and so on.

Investors, like members of Congress and journalists, have little truck with history. They project the recent past onto the future, and they are certain that we're always on the brink, or in the midst, of something new: the Dawn of the Month Club.

STILL, what's going on today in the stock market is tough to resist. "I think in micro terms," says an astute Wall Street friend, who does resist. "I look at what the investor who's in the market is doing, at the ground level. His stock goes up a point one day and three points the next day, and, of course, he doesn't want to sell. The game has become so much fun to him that he has to stay in. There's a compulsion to play. People just refuse to sell. They're having fun, and they think, If you sell, and the stock keeps going up, you feel like a schmuck.

"But I don't play the game in a time like this. When the market was 40 percent lower, there was very little risk—stocks weren't going to go down much further. But today, it's a long way down. The losses when everyone heads for the door at the same time are going to be mind-boggling."

He admits that it is just possible that the market is telling us that in fact we are entering a new epoch, that inflation has been licked, that stocks in the late 1980s are going to be like real estate or Old Masters paintings in the late 1970s. But he's willing to take his chances by ignoring the buying panic. He'd rather leave the money on the table. As *Barron*'s put it last week: "Who was it—Bernard Baruch—who confided that the way he got rich was by selling too soon?"

My friend isn't the only one who's not playing. One well-known investor, who recently sold hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of stock in one of his prime invest-

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ments, explains: "It was a nice stock for us. We thought someone else should get to own it for a while." Charles Allmon, the Washington-based genius who publishes the prescient newsletter *Growth Stock Outlook*, has been selling equities lately, and now 45 percent of the money of the accounts he manages is invested in cash equivalents rather than in stock. George Michaelis, whose Source Capital ranked first among closed-end funds with an average annual return of 24 percent over the past ten years, is only 70 percent invested in the market, according to *Forbes*. They see very few bargains these days. They may be wrong. But, during a buying panic like this one, the penalty for being wrong while staying on the sidelines is much lower than the penalty for being wrong if you're playing—and you have to rush for the exits.

JAMES K. GLASSMAN

POSTCARD CANADA

HIDING SIKHS

Vancouver

THE VIOLENT BATTLES of Sikh separatists against the government of India have spilled across the oceans and onto the rainy streets of British Columbia. With street fighting and lawsuits, fundamentalist Sikh factions favoring the establishment of an independent Sikh nation in India's Punjab province recently seized control of three out of four of Vancouver's *gurdwaras* (temples), which serve as the Sikhs' spiritual and political centers. Canadian police and Indian government authorities, meanwhile, have collected what they consider to be persuasive evidence that a Tokyo airport explosion last June 23 and the Air India jumbo-jet crash a few hours later near the Irish coast were caused by bombs planted by Sikh terrorists operating from Vancouver.

There are more Sikhs in London and even, perhaps, in Birmingham, England, than in Vancouver. But the nationalist passions of Canadian Sikhs seem to grow in proportion to the distance from their homeland. To India, the Sikh militants in Vancouver represent very much the same kind of threat that Britain perceives from IRA supporters in Boston and New York. The Sikh separatists use Vancouver, Toronto, and to a much lesser extent, a handful of American cities as bases from which to raise funds and organize arms shipments to the Punjab. But they are proving more ruthless than Irish Republicanism's sentimental and clumsy American supporters.

The separatist quarrel that in 1984 drove Sikh fundamentalists into battle against Indian troops at the Golden Temple of Amritsar (and which, after the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards, sent India's Hindus on a rampage against Sikhs) has smoldered in Canada for years. In 1952 Vancouver's largest *gurdwara* was riven by a dispute that led a faction of self-proclaimed "true Sikhs" to break away and form their own temple. The rebels declared themselves to be the only authentic followers of the Sikh religion's ten gurus, and condemned the temple leadership for accepting members "such as clean-shaven persons and people who were not regular attenders."

As factional arguments about politics and religion boiled over into bloodshed, Sikhs earned a reputation as Canada's most fractious minority. In 1978 Vancouver was horrified by the murder of Beant Singh Dhaliwal, a Sikh real esate agent who was involved in an internal dispute at a Vancouver *gurdwara*. Dhaliwal was tortured and then hanged. In 1982 a *gurdwara* official and a Canadian lawyer were killed by a Sikh gunman who opened fire in a Toronto courtroom during a hearing on a lawsuit over control of a *gurdwara*.

Until quite recently the Sikh exiles were regarded by Canada with indulgence, even when their squabbles claimed an occasional innocent bystander. With their bright turbans and flowing beards, the Sikh fundamentalists proudly set themselves at the fringes of Canada's "multicultural" society. Canadians pride themselves on their tolerance of the most exotic ethnic eccentricities, and tended to dismiss turbulence among the Sikhs as the antics of voluble but harmless new arrivals.

BUT INDIA was not at all amused at the direction the intra-communal warfare among Canadian Sikhs began to take in the 1980s. In 1981 there were reports that extremists from the Punjab had attempted to recruit Sikhs in Vancouver for commando training. Then a group of separatists announced the opening of a "consulate" for the nation of "Khalistan" in Vancouver, which proceeded to issue currency, postage stamps, and passports in the name of the unborn Sikh homeland. And in May 1982 the Indian authorities learned that a Sikh priest named Talwinder Singh Parmar had turned up in Vancouver. Parmar was wanted in the Punjab for the murder of two policemen, and the Indian police had offered 50,000 rupees ($7,000) for his capture. He spent six months on the run in India before making his way to British Columbia. Parmar was a leader of the Babar Kalsa, a separatist grouplet that modeled itself on the Israeli and Kurdish independence movements. Mrs. Gandhi was particularly alarmed about the Babar Kalsa's activities because of its alleged willingness to accept support from Pakistan. Before Parmar's flight to North America, his reputation among Sikh separatists had rivaled that of the separatists' fiercest leader, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who was killed in the Golden Temple raid.

India lodged an extradition request for Parmar with the Canadians, but officials in Ottawa ignored the Indian demand. He was allowed to travel freely in and out of Canada and to acquire a Canadian passport. In 1983 India persuaded West Germany to arrest Parmar while he was in Europe on a speaking tour. But he was later released after an Indian extradition request failed, and he returned to Vancouver.

India stepped up its protests to Ottawa, especially after Canadian Sikhs celebrated in the streets following Mrs.

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Gandhi's murder. But it was not until last summer's Tokyo airport bombing and Air India crash—and the evidence collected by Canadian police and counterintelligence agents of a Vancouver connection—that Canada began to reassess its approach to the Sikhs.

Witnesses say that a turbaned man, using the name L. Singh, bought consecutively numbered tickets from a downtown Vancouver airline office for both flights. A clean-shaven man using the name L. Singh got into an argument with a baggage clerk while checking luggage from Vancouver onto the Air India plane, but never boarded. L. Singh also never boarded the flight to Tokyo. The man who bought the tickets had a detailed knowledge of Vancouver's Sikh community. Among the phone numbers he gave to the ticket clerk were the number of the Ross Street *gurdwara*, Vancouver's largest temple, the home number of a Sikh who was once arrested for vandalizing the Indian consulate in Vancouver with a sword, and an out-of-date home number for a Sikh who was beaten with an iron bar in a temple dispute. Police also determined that a stereo tuner that had contained the Tokyo bomb had been distributed to a Woolworths outlet in Burnaby, a small logging town on Vancouver Island with an active Sikh temple.

Last November the Canadian Mounties arrested Talwinder Singh Parmar and a Burnaby Sikh, Inderjit Singh Reyat, on rather vague explosives charges. In court a prosecutor said that last June Parmar and Reyat had set off what appeared to be a small time bomb in a Vancouver Island forest, although the charges do not allege that either Sikh participated in airplane bombings.

CANADA now says it will begin deporting Sikhs who sought political asylum because of fears of reprisals by India for the Golden Temple incident. But no deportations or extraditions are likely soon, and in the meantime the activities of Vancouver and Toronto Sikhs continue. Several Vancouver temple leaders who favored last year's political settlement between Rajiv Gandhi and a moderate Sikh party were beaten by gangs as separatist groups waged successful battles to take over the *gurdwaras*. And a new Sikh celebrity has arrived in Vancouver: Lakhbir Singh Brar, nephew of Bhindranwale. The Indian government wants to revoke his passport. Manmohan Singh, a Vancouver separatist leader, says, "We respect him as a man from a very high family."

And the separatist rhetoric of Canadian Sikh militants grows hotter. "India cannot survive without the Sikhs in Punjab," declared Uday Singh, an Ontario university professor, in a recent Punjabi-language newspaper editorial. "Sikh armymen should rebel and attack the governmental army. Let a Sikh airman come forward and reduce Delhi to a rubble. Sikhdom will forever be indebted to him."

MARK HOSENBALL

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The balanced-budget amendment hoax.

CON CON CON

SPURRED by the desire for a balanced-budget amendment, 32 state legislatures have petitioned Congress to call a constitutional convention. If these applications are valid, we are only two states short of the 34 state petitions that would force Congress to call a convention.

Congress is now taking the matter quite seriously, and is contemplating two responses. Both are inappropriate. Fearing that a convention would propose amendments on subjects other than the budget, many in Congress are inclined to have Congress itself propose a balanced-budget constitutional amendment—the course urged by President Reagan in his State of the Union address. Then there is the proposed "Constitutional Convention Procedures Act." Because the legislation holds out the hope of exerting some control over a constitutional convention by limiting it to one subject, the procedures bill is supported not only by those who seek a convention, but also by many who are wary of a "runaway" convention. In fact, neither of these steps is necessary because most of the state petitions are invalid, and impose no obligation on Congress.

This whole movement for a convention "limited to proposing the balanced-budget amendment" flies in the face of the constitutional guarantee that any properly called constitutional convention be free to set its own agenda. Those drafting the Constitution in 1787, having provided one amendment method (proposal by Congress and ratification by state legislatures), wanted an additional guarantee that amending the Constitution wouldn't be dependent on the will of Congress. On the other hand, many delegates, including Alexander Hamilton, feared giving state legislatures the power to both propose and ratify amendments. The Constitution thus provides an alternative: "on application of the Legislatures of two-thirds of the several States," Congress "shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments." The very essence of this convention is that it is free of the control of *both* Congress and the state legislatures.

If a constitutional convention would in fact be free to determine what amendments to propose, what is the status of the pending state applications, which are based upon the erroneous theory that there can be a "limited" convention shackled in advance? The short answer is that almost all the applications, by their own terms, self-destruct and impose no obligation upon Congress.

These applications were passed by the state legislatures after they were incorrectly advised that a convention could and would be narrowly limited. Fortunately, many state legislatures were careful to state explicitly in their applications that they desired a convention only if it could be limited to voting on a precisely worded "balanced-budget amendment." Twenty-three states specified that they seek a convention limited to the purpose of considering a particular amendment. Eleven states went further, insisting that

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their applications not be counted toward the calling of a convention if it would have the authority to propose an amendment that varied from the one described in the applications. The Colorado petition, for example, states that "this application and request be deemed null and void, rescinded, and of no effect in the event that the Convention not be limited to such specific and exclusive purpose."

The proposed procedures legislation simply ignores these state legislatures' demands. The bill would allow the convention to propose any amendments that generally addressed whatever broad "subject matter" Congress had defined. (If the procedures legislation had purported to limit a convention to a single amendment, as these state legislatures required, the current count of applications would be nowhere near 32, since different legislatures proposed different amendments.) Convention proponents are now subtly expanding the permissible scope of a convention to include such "budget" matters as federal funding of abortion. What about the state legislatures' requirement that their applications be deemed null and void if a convention can go beyond the particular amendment they specified? Convention proponents now say that this legislative language is mere "surplusage" and should be disregarded by Congress.

It is ironic that those who speak so warmly of the states' role in a constitutional convention would have Congress flatly ignore the state legislatures' express language in order to come up with an inflated count of valid applications. This constitutional "bait-and-switch" scheme should be treated by Congress as a sham, not as a serious call for a constitutional convention.

Virtually everyone—supporters as well as opponents of a convention—now concedes that it would be either impractical or unconstitutional to limit the convention to one proposal. Many state legislatures have clearly instructed Congress what to do in this event. Congress should respectfully return to the state legislatures any petitions that call for a convention shackled by constraints that are beyond the power of Congress to impose. Congress may then consider the balanced-budget amendment wholly on its own merits.

WALTER DELLINGER

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A Washingtonian's nightmare.

OUTSIDE THE BELTWAY

ACCORDING to my journal, I first heard the phrase in 1983 while watching one of those Saturday night Washington talk shows. "Purple-faced guy accused fatso of 'inside-the-Beltway thinking.' Who are these men? I wondered. What are they yelling about?" How ultra-green. Only three years removed from the beyond-the-Beltway U.S., I still found newspapers and "smart people" TV intimidating.

By 1985 this sad fellow had metamorphosed into a young Beltwayian hip enough for all-cotton Boston Trader sweaters and the *Washington Post*'s Federal Report page. There I thrilled to the daily feed of solipsistic "inside the Beltway" coverage: "OPM Deputy a Doughty Turf Protector"; "OMB Curbed on Delays in Issuing Rules." Of course, by then I knew the meaning of Washington's premier buzz phrase, "Inside the Beltway." It is used mainly by journalists who, though they work here and will never voluntarily leave, want to show that This Town's glittering distractions do not prevent their souls from ecstatic commingling with the spirit of the "commonweal." Though they labor in the world of smug armchair opinion-makers, influence-peddlers, out-of-touch pols, self-aggrandizing aides, and myopic bureaucrats obsessed with the Byzantine intricacies of insider Washington, they are not consumed by it.

Conversely, as I gleaned from the teachings of President Reagan, Richard Reeves, Charles Kuralt, Haynes Johnson, William Least Heat Moon, and Chrysler ads, the broad-shouldered lands beyond the Beltway are the true repository of the nation's wisdom, filled with sturdy, clear-thinking, pie-enlarging yeoman-programmer-entrepreneurs who can build a log cabin with hand tools while singing all of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, stopping briefly for commonsense discussions on anything from comparable worth to the trade deficit.

I yearned to know this America that seemed so wonderfully different from the one I experienced in, say, kindergarten through 12th grade. The first obstacle was overcoming my fancy new Beltway prejudices. "My impression," I told a friend and Senate staffer, "is that people 'out there'—excluding my relatives, friends, friends' relatives, your friends, etc.—are coarse and brutal morons concerned only with eating, drinking, breeding, cars, satellite dishes, pro football, and deer hunting."

From then on I looked for an assignment that could double as a voyage of discovery (of country *and* self) deep into America's Heart of Goodness. The chance came when a newspaper agreed to send me, by car, to write about the effects of education reform in a typical American city, Fort Worth, Texas. "Perfect," I wrote in my new Ziggy journal. "A cross-country trip, and the opportunity to watch that remarkable American institution—universal, free public schooling—retool itself in our most robust of states." Equipped with notebooks, sketch pads, and John Cougar Mellencamp tapes, I left Washington on a breezy spring day, spinning past I-495—the Beltway—with hardly a backward glance.

I BLAME MYSELF for not having any impressions through Oklahoma. There was this gas pumper at a truck stop in Bentleyville, Pennsylvania, one of those guys with an oily stocking cap and a sort-of mustache. "Hey, how's it goin'?" I asked. "That ain't nobody but my own

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goddamn business." This brought on a pout that lasted until the Texas border. I must lack the resilience of a Moon or a Kuralt.

I do remember casting many, many backward glances toward Beltwaysville by the time I reached Texas, thanks mainly to daily study of *USA Today*'s "Across the USA" section. This seemed like a good way to tap into America's spirit without actually talking to anybody. Some typical items:

Ohio: Three Canton men arrested on charges of using two-way mirror in Speedy Muffler King restroom to spy on women. Indiana: Filming of movie *Hoosiers*, starring Gene Hackman, is "positive" experience for students at Knightstown Elementary School, officials say. Missouri: 51,710 deer were shot in season's opening weekend—1985 harvest is expected to top 1984's record 71,569. Show-Me Woodsmen insist kill rate "way too low," say snares, pits, automatic weapons needed to halt "carnage of unchecked foliage grazing."

Soon after passing the Last Chance Airbrush Tee-Shirt Shoppe in windswept, sun-scorched Oklatexa, Oklahoma, we come to my first journal entry, the text of a roadside marker just outside the windswept, sun-scorched border town of Texahoma, Texas:

"January 13, 1933. Growth of black-tailed jackrabbit population, while not threatening local crops and grasslands or anything, gave Texahomans idea for what has become largest event of its kind: annual Community Clubbing 'Bee.' My normally intrepid Diesel Rabbit seemed to shudder. 'Easy, little fella,' I murmured, patting the dashboard. 'We're getting out of here.' "

Next entry: "Had interesting talk with bright, clear-eyed, junior-college coed running register at 'Hav-U-8?' convenience store on state highway 83 near Twitty. Totally alive—*vibrant* in a way not seen in the plastique people on K Street or the Hill." Conversation went like this:

"Gas is $13.70. Was you wantin' anything else? Huh? Naw, that slush machine ain't workin'."

"O.K., I guess just this bag of pork rinds then. Say, I heard there's a cantankerous old farmer around here who's fashioned a complete set of vice presidential busts from shells he collected while hiking all of America's national seashores—"

"I don't know nothin' about that. I ain't even from down chere."

"Let me guess. You're part of that uniquely American national transhumance from the industrial Northeast to the Sunbelt?"

"Huh? Naw, I'm from up over to Oklatexa."

I QUIT NOTICING things again and turned on the radio. Click. ". . . 25-year-old Gary Mohammed Deeb was found guilty Wednesday night of the 1982 slaying of three teenagers at Lake Waco. Prosecutors said the grisly murder-for-hire—" Dial, dial. ". . . Deeb had originally hired someone to kill *his* girlfriend, but—" Dial. ". . . Police say the dead man, 31-year-old ex-convict Donald Eugene Bannister, was shot late Thursday night by the 63-year-old female owner of the Silver Dollar Liquor Store—" Click. Pause. No, don't. You'll only regret it. I had to. Click, dial. ". . . was taken downstate after the bizarre murder and buried in what investigators describe as a watermelon patch. . . ." Click. So much for impressionistic musings. From then on, all I wanted was to finish the story and go home.

Now look, Texans, I know what you're thinking. But before you dash off an angry letter about besmirchment of the Lone Star state, just relax and think about it a minute. I mean, your state really *is* the worst. I know it and you know it. The only question worth arguing over is: What are you going to do about it? I have some ideas. First: stop purchasing so many handguns and automatic weapons. Second: do something about the guy on the morning food show on an unspecified Fort Worth radio station: ". . . Velveeta, bacon drippings, sugar, evaporated milk, mandarin orange segments, chunky cream of mushroom soup, sauerkraut, Vienna sausage, margarine, and unflavored gelatin round out this delicious recipe's easy-to-find ingredients." Click.

TO WORK. The idea of this story was to get past the blue-ribbon commission reports, the detached opinions of the pundits, and to talk to the men and women in the trenches. First stop: a junior high. Inside I found the principal, Coach S——, yelling at one of those sad, frozen-in-time girls with frosted hair and green eye shadow whose jeans and tube top always carry the stale reek of marijuana. She was late for class ("Me and Ricky was just . . ."). As Coach dealt with her, I processed six years of bad memories. *Coachus narrowmindicus americanix* . . . the scourge of public education. And a coach who becomes principal is worst of all.

Coach S——, white shoes, navy double-knit golf slacks, smelling of Atomic Balm, ham neck supporting a Steve Roper head bristling with an albino flat top, led me into his office. He looked angry, as if I were just another trouble-making student. Perhaps it was my youthful big red lips and Davey Jones haircut. Whatever the reason, the mental transition from "discipline" to "interview" was never made.

"Well now, Eric, why was it you're here to see me today?" I explained. Again. We'd been through all this on the phone. "And the name's Alex—not 'Eric,' not 'Alec,' not 'Ellix.' I don't know what's with you people. For 12 years you got my name wrong." Damn. This was the reemergence of "Bad Alex," a character I haven't seen much of since high school days. The interview proceeded jerkily. The high point came when I asked him about the school reform measures recently passed by the state board of education. Which parts of this landmark reform act did he, as a principal, find most useful? Which seemed unnecessary? Or less useful than others? Or—

"Why, I like 'em *all*. I think they're all just great. Much needed."

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"Then, ah, why didn't you think of any of them?"

At the next interview, with a high school principal, "Bad Alex" almost got me expelled from Ft. Worth. As before, I had told the principal exactly what I was doing, what we would talk about, how long it would take. "Fine, I understand," he said, "come on out." "Now then," he was saying when we met, "what were you wanting to discuss, Alec?" Again: the reactions of principals, teachers, and parents to the Texas school-reform bill.

"Well, sir, I suggest you try somebody else then. Because I don't have nothing to say about that."

"*What?* Then why did you tell me to come out?"

"You asked me if you could."

Ah, beyond-the-Beltway logic. My suggestion that he couldn't run a toll booth, much less a high school, led to more trouble too dull to describe.

That afternoon was my "last chance." The central office sent me to Ft. Worth's model school, Paschal, an academic high school near the Texas Christian University campus. "How do you do, Alex," the wax-handed principal said. "The name is Errin," I told him. "Errin. Yes, we are familiar, naturally, with your . . . record. Now, my only wish is to answer your questions, to cooperate any way I can, and to make your stay as productive as possible." Thoughtful grimace. "We're *proud* of the excellence we've got here and we're not ashamed to show it. Our students are *achievers* and *doers*." And so on, for half my interview time. Still, he answered the questions, so I have nothing bad to say about him, except that, because the interview went O.K., I was allowed to stay in Ft. Worth three more days.

On the way out of town, one last radio check—"This weekend! One *MILLION* dollars' worth of handguns!"—and then the long high-speed trek back home to Washington.

If I *had* a congressman, I would write him demanding that the Beltway be converted to a 15-foot wall festooned with razor wire.

ALEX HEARD

Alex Heard is a Washington writer.

Roughing it with the freedom fighters.

CONTRA FOR A DAY

BY FRED BARNES

On the Nicaraguan Border

GETTING there was not half the fun. Think of the most arduous, sweaty, and uncomfortable hiking trip you've taken. Getting to the northern border of Nicaragua, where I spent a weekend with the *contras* at two of their camps, is worse. Exactly how I got there I can't say. I'm sworn to secrecy. But let me give you some of the flavor. My companion and I had to ford five streams. Yes, we had a four-wheel vehicle, but it didn't take the bumps in what passed for roads too smoothly. Some bumps were so bad I hit my head on the roof. It's the dry season and the roads were serpentine dust bowls. Practically everyone we encountered was armed, *contras* and civilians, which is normal for a war zone but still unnerving. The most memorable part of the trip occurred when an iguana darted across the road. My companion slammed on the breaks, grabbed his .22 pistol, and rushed toward some brush on the side of the road. He fired two shots. But he came back empty-handed. Too bad, he said. Fried iguana is supposed to be a great delicacy.

I had to settle for standard *contra* food. It wasn't too bad if you like rice, beans, and mystery meat for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I ate hearty. The coffee wasn't hot enough, but it was sweet and strong. And the chow was better than the overnight accommodations at a training camp 15 miles inside Nicaragua. I was told to bring a sleeping bag, heavy boots, water, bug spray, malaria pills, flashlight, toilet paper. I needed all of them. My bed in the Hospedaje Visita, the place for visitors, consisted of a plywood slab on legs. I've slept better. I took my flashlight and toilet paper with me on a late-evening foray to the outhouse. It was supposedly the top-notch outhouse, for officers only. I gave it a quick inspection, aiming my light into the hole in the ground. The eyes of half a dozen rats glistened.

But on a more serious note: Why would thousands of men and boys gather along this remote, mountainous northern border of Nicaragua to fight the Sandinistas? It's not the money. They don't get any. I talked to scores of *contras* over three days, and got basically two answers. Most of the officers have ideological reasons. They hate communism. Or they love democracy. Or they worked for the old Somoza regime, which automatically made them outcasts, and often jailbirds, in Nicaragua under the Sandinistas. Or they worked for the Sandinistas, and soured on them. What's significant is that they

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have political reasons for being in the hills.

The common soldiers, the grunts, answer quite differently. Politics is meaningless to them, ideology even less so. They have specific grievances against the Sandinistas. Land was taken. Money confiscated. A relative killed or jailed. A religious sect persecuted. Or, most common of all, conscription in the Sandinista army was imminent.

TWO IDEAS died quickly after I got to Contraland. One was that the *contras* are merely a ragtag outfit. Their uniforms aren't uniform, and the basic training for recruits is inadequate. But the *contras* have established themselves, at least in northern Nicaragua where I was. From a helicopter you can see *contra* camps stretching for miles and miles, clusters of huts with green plastic wrap for roofs. The most impressive installation is the training camp, carved in three plateaus on the side of a mountain—officers on the peak, troops halfway down, clinic and mess at the foot. It looks permanent. There are plenty of nonlethal supplies at the camps. The problem is supplying troops deep in Nicaragua. The *contras* can't hold positions against fancy Sandinista weaponry, let alone maintain supply lines.

The second idea was that the *contras*, and in this case the largest *contra* group, the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), is an army of Somocistas. Far from it. There are a number of former members of Somoza's National Guard in the officer corps, including FDN chief Enrique Bermudez. But the foot soldiers are exactly the stoical peasant fighters that 1960s radicals fantasized about in other contexts. Mostly they are young, a few not even in their teens. I was told the average age of a *contra* was 19 or 20. When I saw 930 of them assembled at the training camp, I figured 19 was on the high side. The camp commander, *Comandante* Mack, contended that the soldiers represent a third generation. There were Somocistas, then Sandinistas, now "a new generation of Nicaraguans."

Desperate for good publicity, *contra* officers suggested people for me to interview. I decided to pass up most of these interviews and to question soldiers at random. Most were inarticulate in the extreme, muttering short answers in Spanish. I found an 18-year-old at the dental clinic, where a paramedic with three months' training was about to pull a cavity-infested tooth. The soldier's name was Lionel, and he did farm work before joining up. He said he wants "to see a free country." Was that all? Well, the Sandinistas had drafted him, and he deserted after 15 days. "I didn't like the way they treated me," he said. "Only the volunteers get training. They just send the rest of us to fight." It took about a minute to pull his tooth. There was a crunching noise, and the tooth fell in the dirt by his foot. By the way, there was Novocain for the extraction, but the camp hospital lacks aspirin. There are plenty of Tylenol capsules, though, the kind that have been removed from the shelves in the United States.

Lionel was typical. Soldier after soldier told me he fled to the *contras* when faced with being drafted into the Sandinista army. A 14-year-old boy from Esteli in northern Nicaragua who identified himself as Mario Jose—like every *contra*, he adopted a military alias—said "the Sandinistas were going to take me. I don't like communism." A 16-year-old from San Juan with the alias Marvin had the same story. He said the Sandinistas were now grabbing kids as young as 12, something other teenage *contras* claimed as well. None of the teenagers could explain to my satisfaction why serving with the *contras* was preferable to being in the Sandinista military. It just was, several said.

One under-age soldier I spotted in formation had a better excuse. He was named Jorge, and he said his father had brought him. With an officer's permission, he ran off and brought back his father, 40-year-old Miquel Agal, who said he had been a farmer in a hamlet in northern Nicaragua. He got into trouble with the Sandinistas for attending a Pentecostal Christian church. "They said I was a counterrevolutionary," he explained. "I'm a *contra*. I'm *contra* evil people." After working in the *contra* underground, he left his wife and two daughters and joined the *contra* army. A 13-year-old son was killed in combat, he said. He and Jorge, 11, were taking basic training together.

Sensing my interest in father-son *contras*, an officer nicknamed The Lung (he lost one lung when wounded in 1979 while, as a National Guardsman, fighting the Sandinistas) rustled up another pair, Edward Noel Araus, 35, and his son Edmund Rofino Araus, 15. The father said he had provoked the wrath of the Sandinistas by "building up some capital"—a cattle farm, a bus, a machine shop. When he was put under investigation, he fled, bringing along his son for fear the Sandinistas would draft him.

FRANK, 28 years old, was one of the few blacks I spotted. Like other blacks in Nicaragua, he's from the sparsely populated Atlantic Coast region. Frank said he was a designer of coral jewelry, which he made in Managua and sold around the country. A year ago, "I got in trouble with the Sandinistas. They searched me, found money, and said I'm a counterrevolutionary because I have too much money." After a week in jail, he headed for *contra* territory. Frank has a tattoo of a swastika on his arm. He was sheepish about it. "It's very bad, I know," he said. "But it don't mean nothing. I'm going to put an eagle over it."

Were all these *contras* lying? It's not inconceivable, but I doubt it. If *contra* commanders can train scores of uneducated peasants to tell nice stories to a journalist, they've created a more disciplined army than anyone guessed. If this were true, the *contras* would be a highly trained juggernaut. They aren't quite that. And more than virtually every army this side of the Khmer Rouge, the *contras* have gotten a bad press. *Comandante* Mack said American reporters "say they are with us. But when they get back, they write something different."

Mack is a veteran of the National Guard. He was trained in Argentina, I was told, and has been a *contra* "since day one." The training camp was built under his direction. I interviewed him in his small sleeping quarters, which double as a storeroom. Thirty-three cases of Coca-Cola are stacked next to his hammock. He is short, stocky, dark-

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skinned. He'd taken off his boots and put on shower slippers and was listening to an American rock station on a shortwave radio when I walked in unannounced. Mack said what every *contra* commander I encountered said. The *contras* can win. With military aid from the United States, they can advance against the Sandinistas and hold positions. "From the first moment we get the aid and full support, the Sandinistas are going to start crumbling. It'll be an avalanche." Threatened, the Sandinistas will step up their repression, he said. This, in turn, will touch off "a general insurrection." The Sandinistas will "face a crisis by the end of the year," insisted Bermudez, the *contra* leader. Mack doesn't have a timetable.

These assurances didn't seem to spring from mere bravado. *Comandante* Invisible, the chief of intelligence, ran down a half-dozen reasons why the *contras* won't wind up like the Cuban exiles who landed at the Bay of Pigs in 1961, didn't touch off a national rebellion, and were defeated. Discontent, repression, devaluation of the currency, betrayal of democratic principles, persecution of the Catholic Church, inflation—all are products of Sandinista rule, Invisible said. Besides, the Cubans weren't confronted by "a consolidated armed force like we have. And the [anti-Castro] Cubans didn't have the support of the population that we have."

INVISIBLE, 35 years old, got his nickname when he escaped from a Sandinista jail. He had been in the National Guard for two years when Somoza fell, and he planned to leave Nicaragua under Red Cross protection. Instead, he was turned over to the Sandinistas and imprisoned for four years. "The moment I got out, I headed for the *contras*," he said. As a Guardsman, he insisted, he never supported Somoza or any politician. "I belonged to a younger generation of officers who were trying to change the National Guard and get away from the past." He gave a Nuremberg defense. "I was a disciplined soldier. I followed orders." Now he has the most disciplined appearance of the *contra comandantes.* His hair is neatly combed, his fatigues immaculate.

I talked to two *comandantes* who said they had fought in the Sandinista army. Both later defected for political reasons. Jimmy Leo stayed for only a few months of Sandinista government. "I thought I was going to work for a democratic regime," he said. "We were betrayed. Whatever it takes, the Sandinistas have to be driven out." *Comandante* Johnson became a follower of Adolfo Robelo, the leader of a social democratic party and now one of the three leaders of the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO), the weak umbrella group for all the *contra* forces. The Robelo link got Johnson in trouble with the Sandinistas, who had installed him as head of a coffee distributing firm. He couldn't get a passport, so he left Nicaragua by foot in 1981. His wife and children went to Honduras. Three of his brothers stayed behind. Johnson said all three are officers in the Sandinista army.

Next to Bermudez, the most uncompromising of the *comandantes* I talked to was Dr. Aureliano, the chief surgeon ("everything but brain and heart surgery") and boss of a combat unit. He was in Mexico studying medicine during the 1970s, he said, and wound up in California in 1981. His family stayed in San Francisco while he headed to the Nicaraguan border. His wife complained, but "nobody can tell me anything. I am an enemy of communism, 100 percent." The doctor went with Adolfo Calero, one of the UNO troika, to Angola last year for a summit of anticommunist guerrillas sponsored by New York businessman and politician Lewis Lehrman. He sneaked into Managua in 1983, and barely escaped. His brother, who runs a hospital, was thrown in jail as a reprisal, he said. Word was passed through their sister recently that the brother would be released if Aureliano abandons the *contras*. His response: forget it. "Many commanders have died at the hands of the Sandinistas. If my brother dies, he'll be just like those commanders."

Bermudez, who, like Sandinista honcho Daniel Ortega, wears designer sunglasses, has more enemies than just the Sandinistas. He was Somoza's military attaché in Washington in the late 1970s, but understandably plays that down now. In his office, a wooden shanty decorated with a bathing-beauty calendar and a U.S. Marine Corps desk set, he railed against the press and human rights groups. The stories of continuing atrocities by his troops are untrue, he said. To prove it, he presented a commander named Tigrillo, who he said was blamed in a recent report for murder. The man was in the hospital at the time, Bermudez contended. Anyway, it's not up to him to combat false stories of human rights abuses. "I'm totally involved in military problems," he said. "The only source of information we have here are the radio, Voice of America, and Radio Sandino." UNO should handle human rights issues, he suggested. Its leaders "live in Miami, in Washington, in Central America. They read the magazines. They know the accusations. We don't have any organizational capacity to mount a propaganda campaign. We can't put out a booklet on Sandinista human rights abuses. But all anyone has to do is interview Nicaraguans at the refugee camps." Journalists refuse to do that, he said.

I didn't interview any refugees either. The best I could do in three days was form a few impressions. I couldn't investigate human rights cases or determine whether the *contras* are indeed too tightly controlled by Bermudez and friends. If the hierarchy needs a dose of base-broadening, the junior officers and the rank and file don't. The thousands of young men (and some women) who have flocked to the *contras* in the last two years have already given the anti-Sandinista army a democratic face. Many of the younger commanders are victims of the Nicaraguan version of McCarthyism, pilloried as Somocistas because of brief service in the National Guard, which was Nicaragua's only military force under Somoza.

TWO final impressions. The *contras* are in this for the duration. They convinced me of this. Many of the officers have given up comfortable exile in Florida or California or Honduras to live in a squalid war zone. With or with-

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out American aid, they'll fight the Sandinistas. "We're not going to make the mistake the Cubans did, which was to rely too much on U.S. support," a *contra* told me. "When that support vanished, they gave up. We won't."

No matter what President Reagan says, the *contras* are not fighting for a seat at the negotiating table. Who is going to put his life on the line for that? They don't trust the Sandinistas to follow through on whatever they might agree to anyway. Not one of the *comandantes* whom I spoke to mentioned anything about negotiations with the Sandinistas over power-sharing, lifting of censorship, or a new election. To a man, they spoke of defeating the Sandinistas in a military and civilian uprising in which the government of Nicaragua goes from communist to democratic in one swoop. Finally, I asked Invisible about negotiations. He said he strongly favored them. "The negotiations could go this way. If the nine Sandinista leaders leave, the others can stay. We fight for national reconciliation."

Just before I left, Bermudez got word that a Sandinista helicopter had been shot down. He was ecstatic. I was informed that the man responsible was *Comandante* Douglas, whom I'd met on the road, an hour from the camp. He was dressed in civilian clothes, with a pistol jammed under his belt. What he bagged the helicopter with, I don't know. I never heard a shot fired the whole weekend. Except when the iguana crossed the road.

Unraveling the story of a Nazi past.

THE ORGANIZATION MAN

BY PETER LUBIN

IN THE PAST, whenever rumors of Kurt Waldheim's possible Nazi connection surfaced, they were denied at once. "What nonsense!" he used to say. "I was *against* the Nazis." His retainers would darkly blame the obvious candidates: "his aides maintain that the charges were circulated by the Israeli Mission" (*New York Times Magazine*, September 13, 1981). Or the U.N.'s American supporters would denounce the allegations as "McCarthyesque lies," as one put it in a letter to THE NEW REPUBLIC in 1980. But this year, when new charges were made by the World Jewish Congress in March, there was dead silence at the U.N. "We will have to wait for Mr. Waldheim to explain," as his former press spokesman put it. A combination of research, luck, and the fact that information long entombed in archives was at last made public gave lie to Waldheim's categorical denial of any Nazi connection.

Kurt Waldheim is the former secretary-general of the United Nations, now a candidate for the presidency of Austria. For some he has been a model of nonideological diplomacy and urbanity in the service of peace. For others his was always a resistible rise: an appetizing salary, stratospheric company, degrees *honoris causa* so meticulously recorded in *Who's Who*, all wrapped in righteousness—my work for a better world.

Now years of dissembling for Waldheim have unraveled. Records have been found showing that Waldheim joined a Nazi student group on April 1, 1938. That was three weeks after *Anschluss*, the incorporation of Austria into the Third Reich. Even before then Waldheim told a Jewish school friend (now a tailor in New York City) that he should never contact him again. And it has been confirmed that on November 18, 1938, Waldheim joined a mounted unit of the *Sturmabteilung* (SA), or the Brownshirts. When John Tagliabue of the *New York Times* confronted him with this new evidence, Waldheim found his diplomatic smiles of little use. He did not dare to deny the authenticity of the documents or of the photographs discovered. Rather, he tried to empty the evidence of all meaning.

In that interview, Waldheim described the Nazi student union as something like summer camp: students "had a choice among sports of tennis, horseback riding, and motorcycle racing." He may have been a member, but he didn't really mean to join. His heart wasn't in it, thus the allegation wasn't true. "And if it were true, well, so what?" he told the *Times*. "It would still not be a sign of Nazi thinking or that I was a proponent of theirs. You should not exaggerate. The student union was nothing, a totally harmless, fully uninteresting organization, in which most of those who went wanted to study, to somehow be left in peace."

The Brownshirts were the street bullyboys of Nazism, well versed in intimidation, arson, and murder. (So criminal were their activities that after the war ended the American Joint Chiefs of Staff sent a directive to U.S. commanders, listing the Brownshirts as among those subject to automatic arrest.) About another document that links

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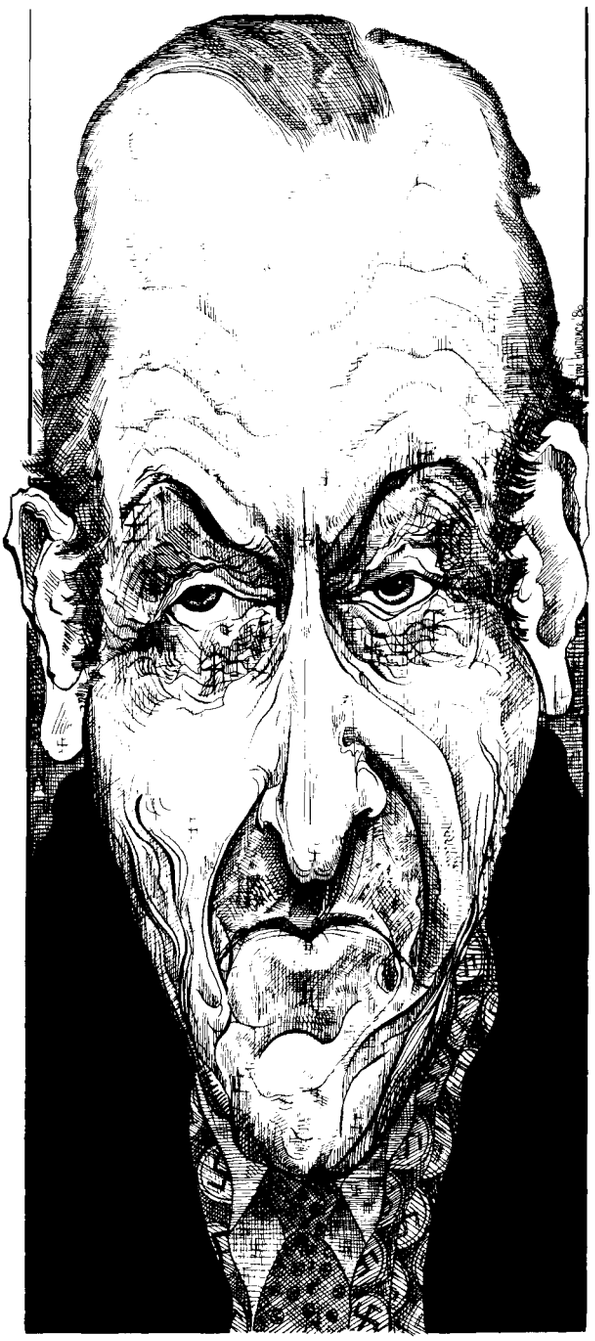
Waldheim to the SA—a 1940 request to continue his law studies that lists his SA membership—Waldheim told the *New York Times*, "My father very often did that kind of thing for me." Waldheim said that the Nazi student union and the SA student group had been established by "one or two students" and "used for social gatherings, coffee parties and things like that."

But after Tagliabue's story appeared, Waldheim reverted to his previous denials. "I was never the member of any Nazi organization," he insisted. He claimed that Tagliabue had "misunderstood" him. The documents have been "deliberately misinterpreted," he says. "Isn't that interesting? For 40 years nobody cared about all this. Nobody found anything. And now, because I am running for the Presidency of Austria, suddenly somebody digs in and produces accusations which are completely untrue. . . . The timing of it is perfect. For 40 years these things have rested," Waldheim told the *Times*.

No reporter has yet pointed out the full significance of Waldheim's enlisting in the SA on November 18, 1938. *Kristallnacht* was a night of arson, looting, and murder directed against Jews all over Germany and Austria that began on November 9, 1938, and lasted through the next morning. Forty-two of Vienna's 43 synagogues went up in flames. Brownshirts dragged Jews out of their shops and houses, beating them senseless (and killing some), kidnapping others to be tortured at leisure, and taking still others away to suffer what Waldheim delicately describes in his book *The Austrian Example* as "an even more uncertain fate."



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

As for the war years that followed, Waldheim has been careful to publish a revised edition of his life. In this edition he was drafted early in the war and sent to the Eastern front, where he was wounded in 1942. He says he then returned to Vienna to recuperate, to get married, and to obtain his law degree. Waldheim has recounted this invention many times, in campaign biographies, interviews, and most recently in his 1985 autobiography, *In the Eye of the Storm.* (The two pocket biographies of Waldheim I found at the U.N. skip over this period altogether—life begins at '45.)

In November 1980, Waldheim felt compelled to reassure New York Representative Stephen Solarz that "I was never the member of any Nazi organization. I myself was wounded on the Eastern front and, being incapacitated for further service at the front, resumed my law studies at Vienna University, where I graduated in 1944." In the *Times Sunday Magazine*'s respectful 1981 story titled "The U.N.'s Man in the Middle," Waldheim depicted himself as an ardent anti-Nazi ("he himself joined the anti-Nazi Austrian Youth Movement"). He explained that he had been drafted into the German army, but "fortunately I didn't last long. My unit moved to the Russian front in the winter of 1942. I was badly wounded in the ankle, I couldn't walk, and they gave me a medical discharge."

Waldheim did enter the military on August 15, 1939, and did serve on the Eastern front in a reconnaissance unit. He was hospitalized on December 18, 1941 (not in 1942, as he sometimes reports). His recovery was quick (not prolonged, as he usually claims), and he returned to duty in mid-March 1942. Except for those three months, Waldheim was in the military continuously from August 1939 to the end of the war.

Most important, while it is true that Waldheim married and received a law degree after his injury, he was not out of the military nor was he attending school in Vienna, as he implies. On March 14, 1942, German military records show that Waldheim was assigned to the German army command, headquartered in Salonika, Greece. The German military controlled the Salonika area and much of what is now Yugoslavia, including Serbia and, through a puppet government, Croatia. The Italian army controlled southern Greece (including Athens), Albania, the Adriatic coast, and a sliver of Croatia. Waldheim served as a staff member for General Alexander von Löhr, working primarily as an interpreter and ordinance officer.

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In August 1942, General Löhr became the commander of the German army in the Balkans and Greece. Under Löhr's command, atrocities against civilians—Serbs, Croats, Greeks—were commonplace. And it was under Löhr's direction that the wholesale destruction of the Jews of Yugoslavia and Greece was achieved. Löhr was hanged as a war criminal in 1947. According to the historian Gerald Reitlinger in *The Final Solution*, he was "perhaps more implicated in Jewish deportations than any other Wehrmacht commander."

WE ALSO KNOW that between March and July 1942 Waldheim spent time in Croatia. It was the time when the Ustasha, the Croatian fascists, were busy massacring Serbs and Jews, with a great deal of help from their German friends. These "anti-partisan campaigns" were always accompanied by the massacre of civilians. When a German soldier was shot or wounded by the partisans, the Germans in the Balkans would frequently kill 100 Jews as retribution. On September 9, 1942, Waldheim was awarded a medal by the Ustasha for "brave conduct" in battles fought against partisan units in central Yugoslavia in the spring and summer of 1942. The award, Waldheim says with understandable modesty, was "a matter of routine."

General Friedrich Stahl, who recommended Waldheim for the "honor," took part in the *schlagartige Aktion*, the sudden roundup of the Jewish male population in Serbia. Many of the Jews were murdered on the spot. "The murders were carefully arranged," says historian Raul Hilberg. "The shooting detachments were to be officer-led; the shootings were to be carried out with rifles from a distance of eight to ten yards; there was a provision for simultaneous aiming at head and chest."

In late March 1943, Waldheim went to Salonika, where General Löhr was determined to solve the Jewish question in the area. He had one big problem. Italian troops and Italian diplomats frequently helped Jews escape from the Germans. The Italian sliver of Croatia had been a refuge for 5,000 Jews. In Salonika itself, in early 1943, the Italian consul was giving out naturalization papers to Jews. Italian officers would even claim to be married to Jewish women and accompany them to safety in the Italian zone. Just before the deportations from Salonika began, General Löhr asked General Carlo Geloso, an Italian army commander in southern Greece, for assistance in removing Jews from Italian-occupied Greece. Geloso refused.

Löhr went ahead anyway. On March 15, 1943, the Germans began deporting the 46,000 Jews of Salonika, 45,000 of them to Auschwitz, and the rest to Bergen-Belsen. The Jews of Salonika, constituting at least a fifth of the city's population, were world-famous. The Jewish community dated back to the beginning of the 16th century, with the arrival of Jews expelled from Spain in 1492. There was a vast Jewish cemetery located prominently in the city. There was a famous library of Hebrew and Ladino manuscripts. It would have been hard for anyone, let alone *Oberleutnant* Waldheim, to miss what happened over the next seven weeks.

The Jews of Salonika were told that they were being sent for "resettlement" among their co-religionists in Krakow (who by that time had all been murdered). Marriages were hastily arranged by young couples hoping, writes Hilberg, "to start a new life in the East." The ruse was necessary because the deportations were so public. But even the Italian general Geloso—who (unlike Waldheim) was not present in Salonika—knew what was going on. As Meir Michaelis reports in his book *Mussolini and the Jews*, Geloso "was of course fully aware of the atrocities that were being perpetrated in Salonika at that moment; in his report to the Palazzo Chigi [the Italian Foreign Office] he referred to mass deportations of Jews 'in overcrowded trains, forty persons per cattle truck.' " The true figure was closer to twice that. The Transport Command of the Wehrmacht provided the trains. Of the 2,800 people deported in the first convoy, fewer than 800 survived to "register" at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Through early May, 16 similar convoys, each packed with between 2,000 and 2,800 people, left the station in Salonika.

How could Geloso have known so much, but Waldheim, serving on General Löhr's staff and living near Salonika during the months of the deportation, have known so little? Interviewed recently on Austrian television, he said that he was "not in Salonika," but "far outside." How far? About six kilometers (four miles), he recalled. He admitted he occasionally "went into town," but insisted that he "saw nothing."

"I committed no crime in the whole time," Waldheim says. "I sat there and the German command gave orders to the Italian units and the Italians gave messages back, and they needed an interpreter." The interpreter's function, however, would appear at this time and place to be a good deal more sinister. The German commanders were constantly after the Italians to collaborate with them in rounding up the Jews. It is hard to believe that an interpreter (who was organizationally attached to the intelligence division of the army) would not know a great deal about the plans to deport and murder the Jews. And Waldheim was not only an interpreter, he was an ordinance officer as well.

Nor, it seems, did Waldheim learn about these deportations during the next two years of the war, when he was in constant contact with the very commanders who had ordered them, and who, after Italy had ceased to be an ally, were busy rounding up the Jews of Athens, Rhodes, Corfu, Crete—everywhere the Jews had lost their Italian protectors. (Researchers from the World Jewish Congress recently found a German army newspaper from December 1944 with a photograph of General Löhr with Waldheim and other officers in Sarajevo.) Tagliabue's interview, Waldheim said in the March 4 *New York Times* article, was "the first time that he had heard of mass deportations of Greek Jews from Salonika."

HAGEN FLEISCHER, described in newspaper accounts as a historian of Greek Jewry, has said that he "knows all the names" of those involved in the deportation of Greek Jews, and that Waldheim's is not one of them.

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This is a bizarre defense, since no one has said that Waldheim gave any orders to have people killed. No one has charged him with being a war criminal. Indeed, Waldheim would welcome that charge, since it would keep the real issue—the 40 years of lies—from being examined too closely.

Another campaign that Waldheim had something to do with was the *Unternehmen Schwarz*, or the Black Operation, against partisan forces that began May 1943. Even in that time and place, the Black Operation became famous for the atrocities committed by the Germans. We know Waldheim was there because a photograph dated May 22, 1943, has surfaced that shows him standing with three high-ranking Italian and German officers at an airfield in the town of Podgorica (now Titograd) in Yugoslavia. Waldheim admits that the photograph (discovered by chance in a curio shop in the Austrian Tirol) is authentic. But he claims that May 22, 1943, was the only day he was ever in that town and that was the only time he ever met the Waffen SS general Artur Phleps, who appears in the photo.

Phleps, it turns out, was at the airfield to welcome the German general who was arriving to assume direction of the Black Operation, which had already been under way for a week. According to a memoir of that campaign, the Italian general who was there apparently squabbled with the Germans for the right to direct the operation. Waldheim would have had to interpret the conversation. Did he know the operation's modus operandi? Did he know that the "mass shooting of prisoners reached its peak" during the Black Operation, according to one historian of the period? "I knew of no atrocities," Waldheim told the *Times*.

Because Waldheim has lied about this period, it is silly to assert, as one of his defenders has, that he "deserves the benefit of the doubt." On the contrary. He once assured the public that he never belonged to any Nazi organization. He now retreats to the position that he never knew of any atrocities. He was against the Nazis. He was discharged in 1942. He was a mere interpreter. He knew nothing about the Jews of Salonika. If you can't prove him to be a certified war criminal, then he is blameless.

"And if it were true, well," he says, "so what?"

"For 40 years, these things have rested."

The long shadow of the 1916 Dublin uprising.

EASTER CHARADE

BY GEOFFREY WHEATCROFT

SEVENTY years ago an armed insurrection took place in Dublin. On the weekend of Easter 1916 the Irish Volunteers seized the post office and a number of other buildings and proclaimed an Irish Republic in what was then part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The uprising lasted several days until it was overcome by the British army, with the loss of about 450 Volunteers' lives and 100 British. The captured leaders of the uprising, including the seven who had signed the proclamation, were tried by court-martial and shot, with one exception: Eamon de Valera's sentence was commuted because he was technically an American subject.

At the time, the Easter Rising was a drastic failure: a military failure, of course, and a political failure also. Before, during, and immediately after the fighting in Dublin the Rising had very little popular support. For decades most of Ireland had been voting for Home Rule—partial, internal self-government. Most Irish seats were represented at the House of Commons in Westminster by the parliamentary Irish party, whose principles were constitutional and nonviolent. The Irish party supported the British government in the Great War, which had been fought since August 1914. In April 1916 Irish Nationalist MPs were among scores of thousands of Irishmen fighting on the Western front, presumably, as they saw it, for their country.

The Easter Rising changed all of that, becoming the very symbol of the romantic gesture and also of victory-in-defeat. The Volunteer leaders were romantics, but not insane. They did not seriously expect to defeat the greatest empire on earth by force of arms. They willed their defeat, and many of their own deaths, gambling on the future. And on the face of things, they won it.

The Rising, or rather its suppression, began a form of revolution in Ireland. This was accelerated by the obstinacy of the British, culminating in the attempt to impose military conscription in Ireland in the spring of 1918. Conscription was opposed by every shade of Irish Catholic opinion from the bishops downward, and prompted a general strike that closed the whole country (including the bars) for a day.

Geoffrey Wheatcroft, a columnist for the *London Standard*, has just published *The Randlords: The Exploits and Exploitation of South Africa's Mining Magnates* (Atheneum).

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At the end of 1918 and of the Great War a general election was held in what was still technically the United Kingdom. The political heirs to the Easter Rising were the ultranationalist party Sinn Fein ("Ourselves Alone"). They won every seat in Ireland outside Ulster and seceded from the Westminster Parliament to form their own legislature and executive in Dublin. The political challenge was backed by a military one; for three years the Irish Republican Army, as it now called itself, fought a sporadic irregular war against the British army. At the end of 1921 a treaty was signed between British and Irish representatives, setting up an Irish Free State in 26 of 32 Irish counties. The other six became and have remained the British province of Northern Ireland.

The treaty split Sinn Fein in two. The faction known as Free Staters supported the treaty and the faction known as Republicans rejected it. They rejected it not principally because of Partition but because of Ireland's continuing ties to Britain. Although the Free State had a measure of independence undreamed of in the 19th century, it was still conditional, with an oath of loyalty to the English crown.

In 1922-23, after the British had gone, these two sides fought a bloody civil war, which the Republicans lost. De Valera emerged as head of a new political party that quickly became something like a permanent party of government. He was prime minister for most of the 25 years between 1934 and 1959. From 1959 to 1973 he was president of what itself had become the Irish Republic.

THE EASTER RISING had cast a long shadow. At the time it was unforgettably commemorated by William Butler Yeats, the greatest poet of the age, in his poem "Easter 1916." Subsequently it assumed a totemic position in the mythology of the new state. Its anniversaries are marked by celebrations and speeches and parades. On the 50th anniversary in 1966 the main railway stations in Dublin were renamed for three leaders of the Rising: Connolly, Pearse, and Heuston. The Rising is constantly involved in the rhetoric of Irish public life, in the battle between the two main political parties, which have their origins in the split of Sinn Fein. The present Irish prime minister, Dr. Garret FitzGerald, leads Fine Gael, the Band of Gaels, descended from the Free Staters of 1922-23. The opposition party, led by Charles Haughey, is the still more grandiloquently named Fianna Fail, Soldiers of Destiny.

The effects of the Easter Rising have rippled outside Ireland itself. Ireland claimed to have had the first 20th-century rebellion against imperial rule. Irish nationalists have often since claimed an affinity with what is now called the Third World. All of that is the apparent, unexamined legacy of Easter 1916, one of the glorious myths of the 20th century. But as we stagger into the unhappy century's last years, maybe there is more to it than that. Maybe, inside and outside Ireland, the Easter Rising has had an influence that is as sinister as it is deep.

The very fact of the myth-mongering is significant. Ireland has shown in exaggerated form the characteristics of the emergent nation: self-obsession and self-pity leading to dishonesty about both the past and the present. Timothy Garton Ash has written recently about the "nationalism of the victim," where absorption in his own undoubted sufferings blinds him to anyone else's. The obsessive, concentrated national myth in which the Easter Rising plays a central part is the classic case.

"England's danger is Ireland's opportunity" was the motto of 1916, ignoring the possibility that England might have been right to battle Germany's attempt to dominate Europe. By the time of the next great war, Ireland had dropped out. From 1939 to 1945, the Free State maintained a policy of rigid neutrality in some ways positively damaging to the Allied cause. This culminated in Eamon de Valera's visit in May 1945 to the German legation in Dublin, where he offered his condolences on the death of Adolf Hitler. Parallels with such studied myopia in the Third World today are too obvious to point out. And since then Ireland has similarly kept out of NATO and all other alliances.

The reason usually given for this fastidious neutrality is Ireland's relations with Great Britain, and the thorn of Partition that is seen as a burning and justified grievance by many outside Ireland as well as inside. In fact, stand back from the Irish—or Partition or Ulster—Question, and it looks to be another striking example of national self-obsession. Stand back, and the most remarkable thing about the case of Irish Partition is how unremarkable it is.

There are similar cases of national rivalry all over Europe, and there will be as long as national feeling lives and as long as people are mixed up. "Partition" was the inevitable answer once the national principle had won over the old nonnational states. It is not a coincidence that Ireland was partitioned just as so much of the rest of Europe was. With nationalism as with physics, actions produce equal and opposite reactions. One national state produced irredentist claims by another.

Compare with Ulster, or similar cases too numerous to mention throughout Europe. By far the worst examples of national oppression in Europe today are in the Eastern bloc. The Hungarian-speakers of Rumanian Transylvania and of Slovakia, the Germans also in Transylvania, the Turks in Bulgaria—these are all truly persecuted minorities who might envy what has been done recently (though without much success) to conciliate the Catholic minority in Ulster. The one thing that distinguishes Ulster from other cases is not the degree of injustice but the noise and heat it generates. That is in one sense a triumph for Easter 1916 and the Irish national movement since, but not a happy one.

THERE WAS a most interesting speech made a couple of years ago. The place was the Ard Fheis, or the annual convention of the modern Sinn Fein (the party linked to the modern IRA), the speaker was Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams, who makes no secret of his support of the "armed struggle" in Northern Ireland. Partition was

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"undemocratic, unwanted, illegal, and immoral," he said. Ireland is "geographically, historically, and culturally one nation." This statement is so obviously untrue as to be scarcely worth saying so, but its "truth" can't easily be denied by anyone who accepts the rhetoric of Irish nationalism running through 1916. To believe in the rhetoric means accepting a version of Irish history more extravagantly rewritten than that of almost any other emergent nation in Europe or the Third World. But to deny it is something that any Irish politician does at his peril.

Adams had more to say. In Ireland "there is really no such thing as constitutional nationalism." That of course is rejected by parliamentary politicians in Dublin. They have to reject it, being constitutional—that's to say elected—and believing themselves to be nationalists. But maybe Adams was right. Again and again for more than a century, constitutional nationalists in Ireland, those who, in a well-worn phrase, prefer the ballot to the bullet, have found themselves overtaken on the outside by those who prefer "physical force," as terrorism was called in the 1880s.

The central fact about the Easter Rising is that it was a violent, unsuccessful putsch against a democratic, constitutional state. In that respect it closely resembles Hitler's unsuccessful putsch of 1923, also against a democratic state, and Lenin's successful putsch of 1917 against the short-lived one-and-only representative government Russia has ever had. In 1916 Ireland was not a colony where violent revolution might be justified by the fact that there was no choice. Ireland was an integral part of a democracy, one of the rather few countries then or since to be governed by universal suffrage. Half-universal, to be precise, but the fact that, as in most democracies at the time, only adult men had the vote doesn't affect the point. It had taxation *and* representation, and freedom of expression, and the rule of law.

That paradox nagged some people at the time. Was it useless sacrifice? Yeats said, "For England may keep faith for all that's said and done." But the huge irony is that England *had* kept faith with Irish nationalism. After previous attempts over 30 years had failed to get through the House of Commons or the House of Lords at Westminster, Home Rule had finally been passed in 1914. What England had discovered was that the one thing England could not do in 1916 and England still cannot do in 1986 is to make a million Ulster Protestants live in a united, independent Ireland.

The Easter Rising ignored that, as Irish republicans have done since. The Rising sanctified unconstitutionalism, but above all it sanctified violence. The rebels not only rejected peaceful politics, they specifically gloried in death, in blood sacrifice. The writings of Padraig Pearse make eerie reading after all we have witnessed in the years since. "We may make mistakes at the beginning," he cheerfully admitted, "and shoot the wrong people; but bloodshed is a cleansing and sanctifying thing, and the nation which regards it as the final horror has lost its manhood." The cold old earth needed "to be warmed with the red wine of the battlefields."

With his odes to boys and death, Pearse was an extreme case. But he cannot be disclaimed by Ireland. He *isn't* disclaimed, as you know when you go to what used to be Westland Row railway station, which now bears his name. And as long as elected politicians salute his name, it is hard for them to deny entirely the legitimacy of the claims of present-day Sinn Fein and IRA. The IRA claims lineal descent from the Irish Volunteers. Are they entirely wrong? The men of Easter 1916 were braver and nobler than those who now leave bombs in shops and bars. But they have too much in common for comfort, with their shared rejection of democracy and their cult of the violent situation.

Outside Ireland it's not hard to hear echoes of the "terrible beauty" that for Yeats was at Easter 1916: in the news daily from Beirut or Central America, or wherever else obsessed and desperate men have chosen the drastic Deed instead of boring argument.

ALL THE SAME, it is in Ireland that the legacy is loudest and most dangerous. The rewriting of history has distorted Irish patriotism and made honesty about the present impossible, with sorry consequences seen from the patriots' own perspective. The truth is that the Irish national movement has been a failure in its own terms. It claims, quite wrongly, that Ireland was one nation; in the event, the unification of Ireland is, for better or worse, further off today than it was in 1922. It claims that Ireland was a Gaelic nation, which was not true either. The attempt to revive the Irish language has been a humiliating failure. Despite decades of ferocious indoctrination, despite the fact that proficiency in Irish has been an essential qualification for official jobs in the Republic for two generations, fewer people speak Irish today than ever.

The survivor from 1916, de Valera, hoped to model Ireland in a particular image. It was not a contemptible image: a land of devout Irish-speaking peasants. It is, however, wholly removed from what Ireland is like today, more than 60 years after independence from England, more than ever pretending to hate England while imitating her, a combination that sharp-eyed nationalists noted and deplored a century ago.

A century ago also, Standish O'Grady, a political Unionist but sympathetic to cultural nationalism, warned about the future. Romantic revolution might lead "to anarchy and civil war; brutal despotisms alternating with bloody lawlessness." That has not quite come true, but the cancer of political violence continues to eat at Ireland—and so many other places. It can never be cut out finally as long as the terrible beauty of 1916 casts its spell. Alternatively, O'Grady said, events would lead to "a shabby, sordid Irish republic ruled by knavish corrupt politicians and the ignoble rich." That devastating prophecy from a hundred years ago haunts Ireland today, a reality shrouded by dreams of romantic Ireland dead and gone, and the bloody and unreal heroes in the post office. □

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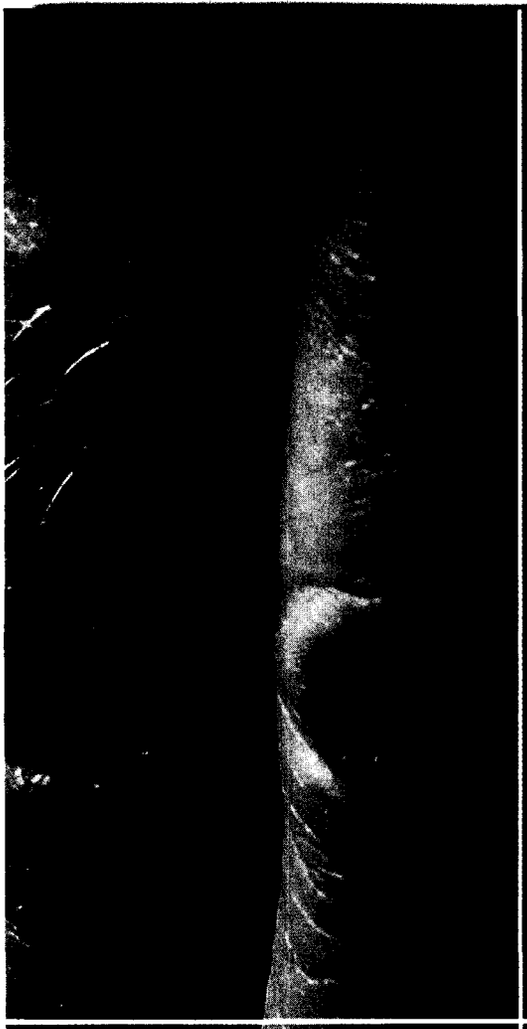

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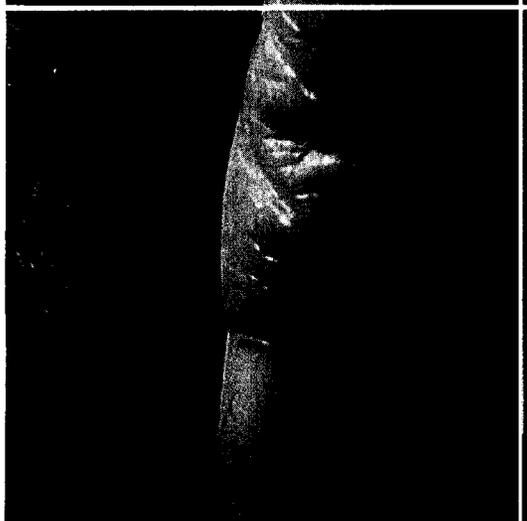

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

London Broils

My Beautiful Laundrette
(Orion Classics)

The front hallway of a small London house. Furniture piled against the front door to block it. Men break in and toss the furniture aside. They come upstairs, and one of them, a giant black man, advances on two white squatters. One of the whites—later we learn he's called Johnny—puts up his hands in wry compliance and leaves. Thus—with illegality (squatting), poverty, and racial difference—begins *My Beautiful Laundrette*.

Johnny then disappears from the film for quite a while. We completely forget about the opening sequence as we plunge into the story of Omar, a Pakistani youth who lives in a dingy South London flat, with trains constantly rumbling by, where he devotedly tends his alcoholic, virtually bedridden father, an ex-journalist of (believable) brilliance. Papa telephones his wealthy brother, Nasser, and asks that Nasser give Omar a job until the boy enters college. This Nasser does: one of his enterprises is a garage, and he employs Omar to wash cars. Nasser, an affectionate man, loves his nephew and soon advances him, encouraged to do so by another relative, the handsome Salim, also prosperous, who turns out to be a drug dealer.

Nasser has an English mistress, Rachel. He also has a luxurious home, a wife, and three daughters, one of whom fancies Omar, to little avail. Omar is fond of her and at one point is even resigned to marrying her; but we soon find out why he is not enthusiastic. One night Omar is driving home in the car his uncle has given him. English hoodlums stop the car and hassle him. Instead of being afraid, Omar gets out and walks over, smiling, to the leader. It's Johnny—a former schoolmate of Omar and also a former lover. The two had split when Johnny joined a local fascist-racist group. Now, however, the two youths resume their affair.

Nasser owns a South London laundrette (laundromat), which is failing. He asks Omar to take it over and make a go of it. Omar invites Johnny to work with him. For capital, Omar steals a shipment of drugs that Salim has asked him to convey from the airport. (We've seen Omar do a similar job earlier.) Such is the closeness of this Pakistani family that Salim almost relishes the boy's enterprise and, expecting to be repaid in time out of the laundrette's profits, does nothing about the theft. Omar and Johnny fix up the laundrette splendidly and give it a gala reopening. It promises to be a success.

This is not where the film ends. It isn't even everything that happens up to this point. Conflicts occur in every stratum of the story, a story that begins simply, then suddenly, almost slyly, becomes quite complex—always lucid but needfully intricate. Tania, Nasser's daughter who likes Omar, gets nowhere with him, though she is fairly blatant; then she tries for Johnny (without knowing that both youths are gay); then she decides to leave home. Nasser's wife, fed up with the very idea of her husband's mistress, brews a magic potion that makes Rachel break out in a rash. (We see the rash and, in the film's context, don't doubt its cause.) Rachel breaks off with Nasser, who is desolate.

But these "merely" personal troubles are all caught up in the motions of what is essentially a political film: about racism and various kinds of exile. Johnny is harassed by his former gang because he now works for "wogs," and this harassment leads to violence. (At one point, Johnny, doing an extra job for Nasser, evicts white squatters for a Pakistani boss as he himself was once evicted by a black.) The affair between Omar and Johnny becomes a counterpoint to the antagonism between their races in their neighborhood, in their city, implicitly between the two youths themselves. The Pakistanis in the film have mixed feelings about England. Nasser won't go home because his country is "sodomized by religion" and money can't be made there. Yet Salim's wife—and, by inference, others in their circle—can't feel that this "island off the coast of Europe" is their home. The English riffraff hate the "Pakis" for their prosperity; the Pakistanis hate the riffraff for their sloth and lack of self-respect. Underneath the plots are collisions between the enforced cleverness of the non-English and the ugly hopelessness of the English poor. (Of course, the echoes ring far outside England.) Yet everything is handled with balance between grimness and comedy—the comedy in some of the personal dilemmas and in the Pakistani appetite for life.

This balance is sustained by the excellence of every element in the film. First, the actors. Omar's drunken father, with long white hair that makes him look like a bedraggled weed, is played with woozy distinction by Roshan Seth. (Our first sight of him is of his hand. We see a hand unsteadily pouring a shot of vodka into a glass on a bedside table; then, im-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Kaos. Paolo and Vittorio Taviani tackle five Sicilian pieces by Pirandello and do the first three well. If you leave then, you'll see a rich two-hour film. (Reviewed 3/17/86)

A Room with a View. E. M. Forster elegantly adapted by the Jhabvala-Ivory-Merchant trio. Except for the dull casting of the heroine, it's this team's fullest achievement. (3/24/86)

Shoah. Claude Lanzmann's nine-and-a-half-hour documentary (shown in two parts) about the Final Solution. Interviews with survivors, witnesses, participants. The title is Hebrew for "holocaust." The work is a monument. (10/28/85)

Turtle Diary. Glenda Jackson, Ben Kingsley, and Michael Gambon interplay skillfully in Harold Pinter's adaptation of Russell Hoban's novel. The "liberation" of three sea turtles from a London aquarium becomes a wry, intelligent comedy of values. (3/10/86)

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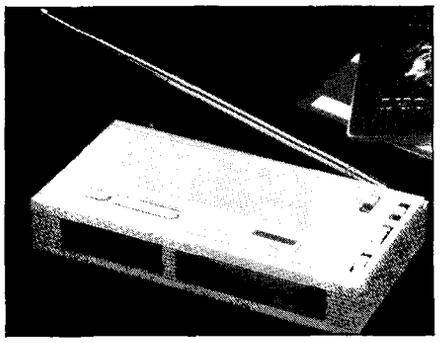

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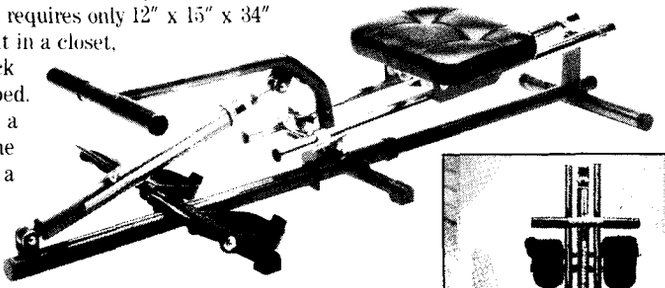

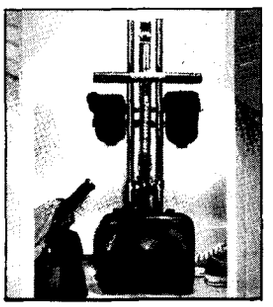

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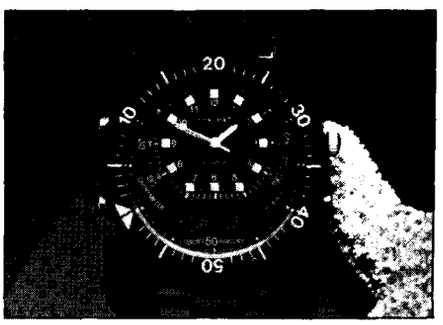

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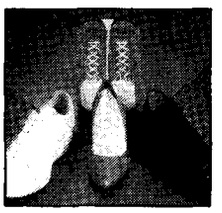

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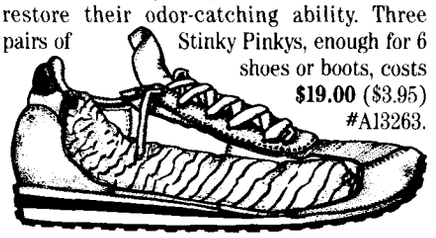

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patiently, the bottle itself is tipped back to an unseen mouth.) Omar is Gordon Warnecke, in his first film, smiling, resilient, vulnerable but courageous. Johnny is Daniel Day Lewis, currently also playing an Edwardian aesthete in *A Room with a View*, here with punk hair, and all "vose fings" that go with the role: cockney accent, taciturn toughness, taciturn passion, and double loyalties. Shirley Anne Field, not seen much since she was Albert Finney's girl in *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1961), is immediately engaging as Rachel. Tania, as done by Rita Wolf, is incarnate disgust: disgust with the inaction and the smug satisfaction of all the men around her, Pakistani and English, young and old. The key role, tonally, is played by Saeed Jaffrey, probably the Indian actor best known in this country. He was Dr. Aziz's friend in *A Passage to India*, and was in *Gandhi* and *The Man Who Would Be King*, among others. Jaffrey is warm, almost buttery, totally endearing and true, irresistible in his humor and affection and flashes of anger. At the reopening of the laundrette, he moves among the customers at the washing machines like the smiling owner of a chic restaurant. I almost fell out of my seat when he asked a woman solicitously, "Enjoying your wash?"

The director is Stephen Frears, who has had vast experience in TV; in fact, *My Beautiful Laundrette* was made for TV. (That this film was commissioned by British TV is all the comment necessary about American TV.) Frears has made two previous theater films: *Gumshoe*, which had some pleasures in it, and *The Hit*, which did not. Here his touch is always dexterous, as in the vodka shot I mentioned, and is sometimes daring. Toward the end, Frears has Omar and Johnny in the foreground, making love in the darkened office of the laundrette, while in the background, seen through a partly shuttered window, Nasser and Omar waltz around the empty laundrette. The shot is just exactly neat enough.

The screenplay is by Hanif Kureishi, 29, who embodies the film's crux: he has a Pakistani father and an English mother. He had his first play produced when he was 18, did philosophy at the University of London, and has since had three more plays produced, as well as some adaptations. Kureishi's dialogue here is flavorful, precise, witty, and bitter. The script has no conclusion. Omar and Johnny are reunited after a rough fight with Johnny's former pals, and there's no reason to think there won't be more troubles. But then how could the film possibly say that troubles of this kind are over?

With the gentle strength that it shows throughout, *My Beautiful Laundrette* gently defies classification. Its base is in social dislocations and political bile, but it articulates these matters through personal matters that are often funny. One result of the film's lack of concern to define itself is that it takes a bit of time for us to discover that that's exactly what it is: a film unconcerned to define itself, a film content to trace the lives of some people thrown together, torn apart, and thrown together again by forces in the world and in themselves.

EDWARD ROTHSTEIN ON MUSIC

High End Jai Alai

To judge from the enormous volume of correspondence I received, my essay on the High End ("The Quest for Perfect Sound," December 30) had the effect of dropping a tone arm onto the middle of a record. My fetishistic devotion to equipment, my eccentric praise of extravagantly priced collections of wire and transistors, my peculiar obsession with the powers of vacuum (as in vacuuming vinyl clean, or vacuum-clamping a disc onto a turntable mat, or dutifully cleaning the connectors on vacuum tubes)—all these preoccupations, conceivably as innocent as raising orchids, sucked me into a maelstrom. I had thought to do no more and no less than draw attention to a world of audio equipment dedicated to a quest for perfection. The result, judging from the sampling of feedback, was something quite different. I could write vituperatively about music for decades without once attaining the wattage of protestation and the limited frequency response that greeted this essay about mere equipment.

For music, it turns out, is literally immaterial; the equipment is not. It is, in fact, precisely where a listener's investment is located—in amplifiers and CD players, speakers and cable. It is either proudly considered an unimportant choice, in which case claiming it is important is an affront; or it is considered important, in which case any further distinction is still more of an affront. The very act of attempting to delineate and criticize equipment was considered by many to be an assault on taste and reason—"snobbish puffery," "unscientific and antirational," "tasteless joke and technical fraud." The offense, it seems, was in trying to make judgments at all about such matters as what sorts of mechanical and electrical contraptions succeed in converting markings on a disc into affecting sound waves. Some argued that there are few distinctions worth making that don't show up in specifications and measurements, and certainly none in some of the price regions I mentioned.

About music itself, there would be no comparable response. Who, after all, would take offense at descriptions of a $30,000 piano or a $250,000 cello? Who would apply the same sorts of pseudoscientific strictures to our perception of live music as have been freely applied to its perception through equipment? Who would argue that one could effectively differentiate between symphony orchestras only in a double-blind listening test? Who would say that the only significant difference between extraordinary instruments such as a Strad or Guarnerius is what can be measured? Or that evaluation of tempi or other qualities of performance should not be "merely" subjective? Or—most absurdly—that the acoustics of a hall can be defined and created entirely through theory and specifications. Criticism of music is considered a matter of subtle hearing, an attentiveness to the logic and power of sound. But criticism of equipment—admittedly a less important act—is considered to be quite different, beyond taste: "science" allows us strict measurability and accountability. Where art is amorphous, our tools of reproduction are not.

Yet, as with all forms of enterprise that touch on the life of music, even the mundane world of audio—two or three stages removed from the composition—demands more subtle attention.

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Audio equipment provides the filters through which much of our music is experienced. Those filters need to be better understood, particularly since our measurements are such inadequate forms of description. The history of music reproduction over the last hundred years shows us that we learn languages of audio through which the music is imagined and re-created. We learn where distortions are, attend to different sorts of signs in the music itself, and translate the information into a version of the live performance. This is why every era has been so enthusiastic about its own supposed audio-realism. It is also why it is impossible to clearly judge audio equipment in a short time or to use much-touted A/B switches to compare the sounds of components. Each part of the audio system is like a peculiar lens placed upon the musical experience, whose shape and magnification and distortion must be understood before we can fully comprehend what we hear. Musicians generally have the worst audio systems and are least sensitive to their variations; their sense of the original is so strong that the lens is simply ignored. But as live musical experience becomes less common for the mass audience, that lens increasingly becomes part of what we think of as music. The more extraordinary systems teach us about the nature of that lens, although as I made clear, it is possible to polish a fine one for less money as well.

But if that lens is irregular in shape, random in its distortions, or even partly blacked out, it means that our imaginations themselves are thwarted. The ears are given cues that they cannot interpret, and the musical experience is further diminished. To put it strongly, this is what the compact disc does. The new technology, now in its infancy, has introduced forms of distortion and processing that do not lend themselves to easy sensory interpretation. One learns to ignore uniform tape hiss, but what is one to do about the strange sounds of digital woodwinds, or the loss of subtle detail, or the drastically different texture that digital music has when mezzo forte than when pianissimo? The compact disc offers a style of sound that is "hi-fi" in its quality rather than musical. Even on a relatively inexpensive sound system, the hi-fi qualities of a CD may seem more impressive than those of an LP. This is why, aside from convenience and technological wonder, the CD has been so commercially successful, and why it is so

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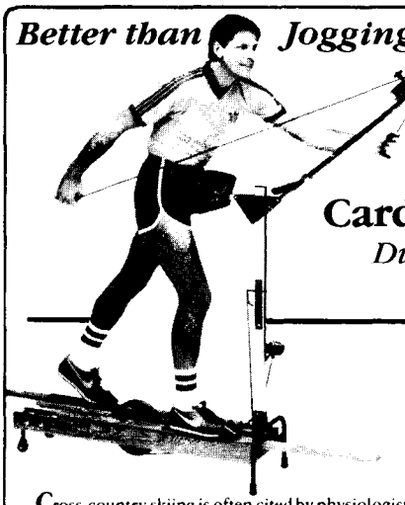

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difficult for its sincere advocates to imagine that anybody could criticize the CD for any reasons other than contentiousness. But a vinyl recording, even on a cheap system, still offers more musical information—nuances, phrasings, and gestures—albeit heard with a smaller dynamic range and with surface noise attached. Moreover, the better a CD is reproduced, the more aggressively it wears upon musical sensibilities. Its texture is homogenized, its tone almost gnawingly unreal. Its renowned silence, to use lit-crit rhetoric, is the silence of absence rather than presence.

The theoretical problem is to explain this phenomenon, and the literature is already immense and too technical to go into here—dealing with subharmonic distortion, phase shift, the logarithmic nature of hearing. The sampling rate for compact discs has been claimed to be sufficient because it accounts for the spectrum of human hearing; but frequencies above the threshold do indeed have an effect on those below, and their elimination as physical phenomena does not occur in the natural world. The sharp electronic filtering required, so close to the boundary of hearing, creates forms of disruption just beginning to be corrected. Moreover, for all the hype, digital transcription of sound does not offer any more permanent and absolute accuracy than did my own unfortunate transcription of Ivan Berger's name into Ivan Davis, when singling him out for praise in my essay. There are errors made; a 20th-generation digital tape is not an exact replica of the first. Some of the technical arguments may be read in recent articles by Philip Greenspun in the *Computer Music Journal*, which provide ample bibliographies. More passionate if no less intriguing discussion appears in Neil G. Levenson's column in *Fanfare*, and of course, in *The Absolute Sound*.

THIS criticism of digital recording is thought to be a highly partisan position, because it smells of a cultish, Luddite opposition to the innovations of technology now being offered to a mass market. The position is considered subjective, immoderate, elitist, provocative. The problem, though, is not opposition to a mass market or to a nascent imperfect technology, but to the highly partisan selling of one to the other with serious limitations ignored and virtues hyped. The image is supplanting the substance.

Opposition is, of course, doomed to historical failure—one might as well oppose a force of nature as oppose a commercially successful technology. The CD is obviously beginning to displace the LP and it will continue to do so. But by attending again to music rather than to spurious hi-fi, the sacrifices will at least be made in sorrow. Gradually, in fact, there have come qualifications of earlier celebrations of the CD, reservations and regrets about onetime messianic proclamations. With such recognitions, perhaps, will also come improvements in the medium. Hi-fi, after all, is transcended by attending to it carefully rather than carelessly. But in the meantime, the real transcendence lies elsewhere. Back to the music.

THE FRAGILE NET

The Stories of Heinrich Böll translated by Leila Vennewitz

(Knopf, 686 pp., $25)

There is a distinct, if abstract, satisfaction to be gotten from working complex equations, factoring out extraneous numerals until at last the simple terms greet each other across the equal sign. An analogous pleasure, but more sensory and emotional, awaits the reader of the stories of Heinrich Böll. Here the distraction and clutter are stripped from human commerce and we are brought face-to-face with our vestigial selves. The aesthetic effect, however, has a bitter cause. For the force of Böll's vision depends most often upon the reductions wrought by fear, confusion, and suffering. That is—to collapse three nouns into one—by war.

Böll needs no introduction. Long before the Nobel Prize consolidated his international reputation in 1972, he had earned the honor of being the spokesman for an entire generation of Europeans, a representative of the times. Böll's youth and young manhood had coincided with the rise of Nazism; he was conscripted in 1939 and spent five years in uniform, at the front and in American POW camps. His first work—which blasted the senselessness of imperialistic conflict—found a ready audience during the shell-shocked years of German reconstruction. He was ever of his time—in recent decades he was an outspoken peace activist—and ever at an angle to it, bearing witness.

Nor did Böll refuse the dais. His fiction, from the first, concerned itself with the common life of the insulted and injured. It gradually widened its reach, in novels such as *Group Portrait with Lady* (1971) and *The Safety Net* (1979), to embrace the whole social order. This compendium, weighted to favor the early stories, does not preserve the proportions of the career. Its bulk is for, and about, the voiceless—frightened boys who were handed guns and orders, bereaved mothers and wives, children. We get the cauterized emotions and hunger-sharpened perceptions experienced by the suffering majority, and very little about the yes-men and the perpetrators. The cumulation of simple perspectives is genuinely affecting. If many of the settings and situations recur from story to story—railway stations, barracks, bombed-out buildings; arrivals, departures, furtive trysts—this is not because of any artistic shortcoming, but because war levels differences. Smoking rubble and fear are the same everywhere.

The collection is arranged in chronological sequence. Thus, by the time we finish we have moved from the chaos of mortar fire through the monochromatic austerity of reconstruction to the disquieting blandness of prosperity. But the war is always there, if not directly on the page then as an implicit point of historical reference—akin to the painter's vanishing point. The slight satiric vignettes set in the near-present would mean nothing without the memory of disaster. Which is to say that Böll is faithful to the way that events become history in the collective memory.

It may be that in death everyone is the same, but at the moment of dying individual uniqueness is most piercingly disclosed. In that instant—or so the writer's imagination would have it—the full path of destiny flashes out, and every act and

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choice can be viewed under the aspect of inevitability. A string of incidents, however unremarkable, becomes a tale. In two of the novellas included here, *And Where Were You, Adam?* and *The Train Was on Time*, Böll makes use of this revelatory possibility. In *And Where Were You, Adam?* he splices together the complex outer circumstances—the significant encounters, delays, choices—that lead up to the death of the soldier Feinhals. Here the young Böll (this was one of his early publications) indulges his appetite for the dramatic convergence. Feinhals is hit by an artillery shell just when he believes his homeward journey is over—"and he rolled in death onto the threshold of the house. The flagpole had snapped, and the white cloth fell over him." The clumsy and obvious knotting of the narrative belies the skill shown in other passages throughout, where terror, fatigue, and a range of freighted human confrontations have been caught with the eye of a practiced watcher.

The Train Was on Time, likewise an early work, attempts an inward rendition of the destined event. But in this account the strategy is reversed. The young soldier, Andreas, has a vivid premonition of the time and place of his death. The novella takes us through the excruciating days of waiting, building suspense by the minute until the expected finally happens: "Now we must be in Galicia, he thought, quite close to Lvov, since Lvov is the capital of Galicia. Now I must be just about in the center of the net where I'm going to be caught." There is an undeniable power in this kind of procedure—*Oedipus Rex* is the paradigm—but the portentousness gets to be too thick by the end. More memorable, finally, are the sketches drawn along the way, of Andreas's interminable train ride and of his fellow soldiers. Böll did not pull a description like this out of airy nothing:

> It was horrible to have the man leaning over the map with him. Andreas could smell the canned meat on his breath, which was still not quite free of the odor of digested, partially acidulated schnapps. He could smell the sweat and grime and was too wrought up to see anything; then he saw the man's finger, a thick, red, dirty, yet very good-natured finger, and the man said, "That's where I have to go."

A good many of the shorter fictions also turn on the idea of fatedness. In "Stranger, Bear Word to the Spartans We . . . ," a dying soldier is carried into an infirmary that he realizes was once his gymnasium classroom; the handwriting that he notices on the blackboard is his own. We don't need to be told that he will die in that room. "Adventures of a Haversack," similarly, traces the bizarre circuit that a dead infantryman's bag must follow in order to end up, long years later, on its original nail.

BÖLL'S penchant for meaningful intersections seems to be at odds with the unblinking naturalism of his treatment of character and place. One may be tempted to dismiss it as unfortunate artifice. But it is possible, I think, to accept it as his attempt to depict the inexplicable change in the order of things that cataclysm initiates. I have often heard from veterans of the European war that miraculous meetings, deus ex machina escapes, perversely ironic deaths were all accepted as natural. It is almost as if the exponential increase of the death factor intensified the play of significance, as if the laws of daily life are abolished when a boiling point is reached. But with Böll we also cannot discount the religious influence.

Böll thought of himself as an unorthodox, even renegade, Catholic. Reared in the faith, drawn by temperament to its moral humanism, he was permanently alienated by Church hypocrisy. As he wrote in his 1981 memoir, *What's to Become of the Boy?*: "After the seizure of power, the Reichstag fire, and the March election, it was, incredibly, the Vatican that accorded the Nazis their first major international recognition." To the end of his life, Böll could not reconcile the spirituality of the creed with what he saw as the opportunism of its organizational vessel.

Still, a religious sensibility is active in his work. It is evident both in his humane treatment of characters, even the lowliest, and in the narrative developments that tend in every instance to meaningful resolution. Though Böll does not gloss facts—in his world the evidence of suffering far outweighs evidence of redemption—he does not exclude redemption altogether, which is no small victory for spirit in times as dark as these. The scale, nevertheless, is always modest. One looks in vain for suggestions that some larger struggle between good and evil has been engaged. The flawed and purblind human soul is not viewed as arena enough for the contest, or trophy enough to contend over.

Böll's intimations of higher meaning are there to mitigate suffering—they

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stand no chance of canceling it. But the possibility remains that death will bring sudden inner reconciliation, if not something even better. In "Reunion on the Avenue," for instance, we read about the death of two trench-mates, who just one minute before had been drinking schnapps and confiding their dreams:

> . . . and while noise sprang to life around me, the frantic barking of the machine gun from Heini's dugout and the sickening impact of the grenade launchers that we called pipe organs, I became quite calm: for mingling with Hecker's darker blood that still covered the bottom of the dugout was a lighter, miraculously light blood that I knew was warm and my own; and I sank down and down until I found myself, smiling happily, at the entrance to that avenue which Hecker hadn't known how to describe, because the trees were bare, solitude and desolation were nesting among wan shadows, and hope died in my heart, while far off, at an immense distance, I could see Hecker's beckoning figure outlined against a soft golden light. . . .

Two-thirds of the way through the collection, Böll's tone perceptibly changes. He gives us, first, a handful of tales from the postwar period, and as violence and horror recede, irony and shrewd psychological observation take over. In a story called "Business Is Business," a cynical survivor studies his suddenly prosperous—and just as suddenly amnesiac—black marketeer, and reflects upon the remarkable plasticity of human nature. "Everything was fine," he thinks,

> your medical insurance was still OK, you had yourself de-Nazified a bit—the way you go to a barber to get rid of that tiresome beard—you chatted about decorations, wounds, acts of heroism, and came to the conclusion that you were a pretty fine fellow after all.

Böll seldom gets any more strident. Either you pick up the message or you don't.

Irony gives way to flatter satire as the stories take on life in recent decades. The writing is more detached, the thematic presentation more idiosyncratic—but at the same time the impact (at least for the non-German reader) is diminished. Pieces like "The Thrower-Away," about an efficiency expert working in secret in the basement of a large firm, and "The Staech Affair," which looks at the consequences of monk absenteeism at a highly touristed monastic retreat, make perfect sense. Still, at times they feel like sections of an encoded dialogue that Böll may have been carrying on with his compatriots. For the power of satire derives from a play upon particulars, and here we cannot be sure that we're catching all of the barbs. "Murke's Collected Silences," on the other hand, negotiates more universal terrain: a pompous culture czar insists that all references to God in his archive of radio tapes be replaced by the phrase "that higher Being Whom we revere." The sharp opposition between his bloated self-regard and the sly, puncturing wit of the underling, Murke—whose hobby is piecing together bits of taped silence that he has gathered—provides delicious comedy.

Böll's strengths were those of a witness, not those of an inventor. His satiric eye was keen, but he had trouble sustaining plots that could serve as credible vehicles. For this reason, the fiction that deals with the immediate circumstances of war is the most vivid. The directionless momentum of combat, the unrelieved tensions of waiting and watching, supply a natural frame and free the author from the need to contrive situations. True, Böll was sometimes guilty of resolutions that exceeded even the prodigal inventiveness of the three fates, but his palpable rendering of fundamental drives and emotions—his ability to sound the depths of the average heart—more than compensated. He knew that the patina of culture and sensible behavior is easily cracked. This collection, which honors an ample achievement, stands also as a reminder of the real hierarchy of human needs:

> He hastily broke off a hunk of bread: his chin was trembling, and he could feel the muscles of his mouth and jaws twitching. Then he dug his teeth into the soft, uneven surface of the bread where he had broken it apart. He was eating bread. The bread was stale, must have been a week old, dry rye bread with a red label from some bakery or other. He continued to dig in with his teeth, finishing off even the brown, leathery crust; then he grasped the loaf with both hands and broke off another piece. Eating with his right hand, he clasped the loaf with his left; he went on eating, sat down on the edge of a wooden crate, and, each time he broke off a piece, bit first into the soft center, feeling all around his mouth the touch of the bread like a dry caress, while his teeth went on digging.

SVEN BIRKERTS

Sven Birkerts won this year's National Book Critics Circle citation for excellence in reviewing.

ANATOMY OF A MURDER

Postmortem: New Evidence in the Case of Sacco and Vanzetti by William Young and David E. Kaiser

(University of Massachusetts Press, 188 pp., $20, $8.95 paper)

Sacco and Vanzetti: The Case Resolved by Francis Russell

(Harper & Row, 245 pp., $16.95)

Sixty-six years have passed since the arrest of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, which sparked one of the most controversial episodes in American history. On April 15, 1920, a paymaster and his guard were shot dead during the robbery of a shoe factory in South Braintree, Massachusetts. Three weeks later, Sacco, a shoe worker, and Vanzetti, a fish peddler, both Italian immigrants and anarchists, were charged with participating in the crime. The following year they were brought to trial.

According to the prosecution, Sacco did the actual killing (at least of the guard) and Vanzetti was one of four accomplices. The evidence against them was contradictory. On the one hand, a number of witnesses identified them as members of the holdup gang. Both were armed on the night of their arrest, Sacco with a .32 caliber Colt automatic, Vanzetti with a .38 caliber Harrington & Richardson revolver. Both told lies when

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they were questioned by the police. Their weapons, moreover, seemed to fit the circumstances of the crime, and this weighed heavily against them in the minds of the jurors.

Both men, on the other hand, had substantial alibis; neither had been convicted of any previous crime; and witnesses for the prosecution altered the stories that they told the police and private investigators immediately after the holdup. Furthermore, no information was presented to the jury about the other bandits, who were never apprehended, and the authorities were unable to connect the stolen money, nearly $16,000, with the defendants or their anarchist associates.

The trial, occurring in the wake of the Red Scare, took place in an atmosphere of intense hostility toward the defendants. The district attorney, Frederick G. Katzmann, conducted a highly unscrupulous prosecution, coaching and badgering witnesses, withholding exculpatory evidence from the defense, and perhaps even tampering with physical evidence. A skillful and ruthless cross-examiner, he played on the emotions of the jurors, arousing their deepest prejudices against the accused. Sacco and Vanzetti were armed; they were foreigners, atheists, anarchists. This overclouded all judgment.

The judge in the case, Webster Thayer, likewise revealed his bias. Outside the courtroom, during the trial and the appeals that followed, he made remarks that bristled with animosity toward the defendants. ("Did you see what I did with those anarchistic bastards the other day? I guess that will hold them for a while.") When a verdict of guilty was returned, many believed that the men had been convicted because of their foreign birth and radical beliefs, not on solid evidence of criminal guilt.

In the aftermath of the trial, as legal appeals delayed sentencing, a mounting body of evidence indicated that the wrong men had been apprehended. Key prosecution testimony was retracted and new evidence was produced that was favorable to the defendants. Herbert Ehrmann, a junior defense attorney, built a strong case against the Morelli gang of Providence, which specialized in stealing shipments from shoe manufacturers. But the authorities had become so rigidly set against the defendants that they turned a deaf ear to contrary views.

Because of this, a growing number of observers, most of whom abhorred anarchism and had no sympathy with radical propaganda of any kind, concluded that the accused had not received a fair trial and deserved a new one. At the eleventh hour, Governor Alvan T. Fuller conducted a review of the case, appointing an advisory committee headed by President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard, to assist him. The Lowell Committee, as it became known, though finding Judge Thayer guilty of a "grave breach of official decorum" in his derogatory references to the defendants, nevertheless concluded that justice had been done.

As events moved toward a climax, the case assumed international proportions, engaging the passions of men and women around the globe. Anatole France, in one of his last public utterances, pleaded with America to save Sacco and Vanzetti: "Save them for your honor, for the honor of your children and for the generations yet unborn." In vain. On August 23, 1927, the men were electrocuted, in defiance of worldwide protests and appeals. By then, millions were convinced of their innocence, and millions more were convinced that, guilty or innocent, they had not received impartial justice.

This was, then, no ordinary case of robbery and murder. Set against the background of the Red Scare and its af-

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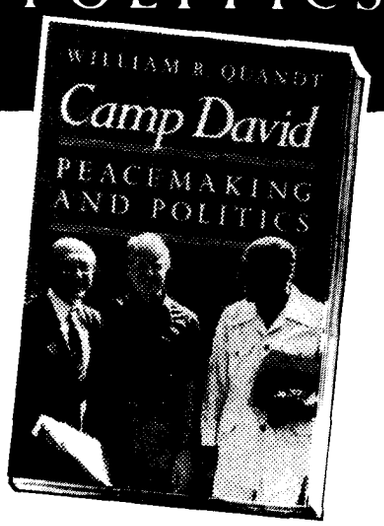

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termath, it involved some of the major issues of the day: mass immigration, labor militancy, repression of radicals. Like the Haymarket affair of the 1880s, it was an episode that divided the nation, arousing deep-seated emotions, defining loyalties, and spawning a literature of criticism and protest. "It revealed," wrote Edmund Wilson in 1928, "the whole anatomy of American life, with all its classes, professions, and points of view and all their relations, and it raised almost every fundamental question of our political and social system."

Not surprisingly, then, it is a case that refuses to die. The appearance of two new books on Sacco and Vanzetti attests to its extraordinary vitality. With the passage of 60 years, one might have thought that everything that was likely to be known about the episode had already been disclosed, every speculation laid to rest, every clue pursued to its inevitable dead end. Yet such a belief would be unwarranted. For over the last decade a flood of new material has become available—the files of the Massachusetts state police, the papers of the Lowell Committee, the notebook of the assistant prosecutor, the papers of a key figure in the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee—shedding light on virtually every aspect of the case, if not resolving all its mysteries and ambiguities.

To some extent, both books under review make use of this new material. Both, while diverging sharply in their methods and conclusions, purport to give us a new look at the now-familiar story. Francis Russell, indeed, claims to have "resolved" the affair. Actually, they tell us little that was not available from other sources, much less offer a fresh interpretation. The ground they cover is largely familiar. Old controversies (the conflicting eyewitness testimony, the equivocal ballistics evidence, the alleged collusion of federal agents in securing conviction) are raked up for the hundredth time. Nearly all of the information they present, fleshed out with summaries of key events and potted biographies of the principal characters, can be found in previous studies of the case.

Both books, however, have their attractions. *Postmortem*, while it falls short of providing a "new view" of the case, as the authors maintain, throws light on what has always been the most telling evidence against the defendants: the guns found on them at the time of their arrest. Vanzetti's .38 caliber revolver, according to the prosecution, had been taken from the murdered guard, Alessandro Berardelli, as he lay dying in the street. It constituted the strongest link between Vanzetti and the holdup and, in the words of Judge Thayer, the "most potent" indication of his guilt. Still, historians have long questioned the evidence on which the prosecution's allegation was based. No one at the trial could swear that Berardelli had his revolver with him at the time of the robbery or that his assailants took anything from his body. Now, from documents in the files of the Massachusetts state police released in 1977, Young and Kaiser produce incontrovertible evidence that the pistols were not the same: Berardelli's revolver was a .32, not a .38, and had a different serial number from that of Vanzetti. The authorities, moreover, were aware that the weapons were different, but withheld their knowledge from the defense in order to secure a conviction.

Nor was this all. According to Young and Kaiser, an even more flagrant deception surrounds the issue of Sacco's pistol. Witnesses testified that the gunman—claimed by the prosecution to be Sacco—stood over Berardelli as he slumped to the ground, firing several times at close range. Four bullets were removed from the guard's body afterward. Yet ballistics tests established that only one, the mortal bullet, marked "bullet III" by the surgeon who performed the autopsy, could have been fired through Sacco's automatic, whose barrel had a left-hand twist. How can this be explained? Young and Kaiser argue that bullet III was a plant, substituted by the prosecution for the original. Sacco, they allege, was the innocent victim of a frame-up.

This is by no means a new theory. Historians have often noted that the description of the murder by eyewitnesses casts doubt on the authenticity of bullet III. Counsel for the defendants, before their execution, suggested that the bullet exhibited by the prosecution might be a fake. What Young and Kaiser now add is an analysis of the autopsy evidence, which strengthens speculation that the fatal bullet could not have been fired through Sacco's weapon. Furthermore, as Young and Kaiser point out, whereas four shell casings purportedly found near Berardelli's body were offered in evidence, the notebook of the assistant prosecutor, Harold Williams, records that only three shells had in fact been recovered. The fourth shell, Young and Kaiser conclude, was added as part of the frame-up. The police, to quote the authors, "test-fired Sacco's gun, substituted the resulting bullet for the original bullet III, and added the resulting shell to the three original shells."

How true are these accusations? Like others before them, Young and Kaiser show that inadequate precautions were taken to protect the integrity of the exhibits. Still, for all their efforts, they fail to establish who was responsible for the substitution, when it was carried out, and whether the district attorney and his associates were implicated. Lacking conclusive evidence, their hypothesis remains unproved. One must therefore question the label "frame-up" that they pin on the work of the prosecution. Sufficient evidence to sustain such a judgment has not yet come to light.

In general, the authors press their claims too far, exaggerating both the significance and the novelty of their findings. Moreover, they exhibit a weakness for emotionally charged adjectives—disputes are "violent," demonstrations "enormous," arguments "pas-

Of Sacco and Vanzetti

Who has been happy, tasting sunny fruits,
Or hearing summer hum her vast green song,
Or watching ocean tugging at its roots,
Or lying in quick arms when nights are long—
How shall he now bask in the honey hours,
Ask favors of his love or of his fate,
When, like a beast fondling what it devours,
Law slobbers justice—cold upon the plate.

Yet history knows: to every age, its crimes;
Empires half-fledged cannot be wholly wise.
We shudder, learning to endure our times,
And from the threatened flood avert our eyes.
Our senses will applaud the world again.
But who can clap life into murdered men?

BABETTE DEUTSCH

FROM TNR, AUGUST 24, 1927

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sionate"—and overuse italics to drive home a controversial point. They are also niggardly in acknowledging the research of other scholars, notably Robert D'Attilio, perhaps the leading authority on the case, and Lincoln Robbins, who first called attention to the significance of Harold Williams's notebook.

Nor are these the only shortcomings. Lacking Italian, the authors have not consulted the anarchist press, with its wealth of information about the movement to which Sacco and Vanzetti dedicated their lives, nor have they availed themselves of the immense Felicani Collection in the Boston Public Library, which adds substantially to our knowledge of the case. Instead, they rely on secondhand police reports, notorious for their inaccuracy and bias—the source, one suspects, of the numerous misspellings of Italian surnames that disfigure the text.

Still, Kaiser and Young's style is workmanlike, if not elegant, and for the most part the evidence is cogently presented. Although *Postmortem* will not alter the fundamental picture or change many minds as to the guilt or innocence of the defendants, on a number of points it provides ampler and more convincing detail than earlier studies of the case. For all its limitations, it is a useful and welcome book.

THE SAME, regrettably, cannot be said of Russell's *Sacco and Vanzetti*. Russell, the author of two books and a dozen articles on the case, knows how to tell a dramatic story. His *Tragedy in Dedham*, published in 1962, is an engrossing narrative that, in spite of many inaccuracies and distortions, continues to have its admirers. The present work adds little of substance to its predecessor, although the style is readable and there is an interesting chapter on the anarchist milieu—the social, political, and intellectual world in which Sacco and Vanzetti lived and acted—a subject largely neglected in previous accounts.

Beyond this, however, the scholarship is very thin. Major collections, including the Felicani papers, have not been examined; Italian materials are ignored in general. What is more, the documentation is sparse and at times inaccurate. Russell repeats many of the errors of fact and interpretation that marred his earlier book, while adding a profusion of new ones, too numerous to be itemized here.

As in his earlier book, Russell adheres to the theory, first elaborated by Max Eastman in *National Review*, that Sacco was guilty of the crime for which he was executed, while Vanzetti was probably innocent. This theory, as Nunzio Pernicone has shown, is based entirely on hearsay and rumor, and cannot withstand the tests of historical scholarship. Russell claims, however, to have new evidence that will prove it beyond any shadow of a doubt.

In 1982 Russell received a letter from a professor in California whose recently deceased father, Giovanni Gambera, had been a member of the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee. The elder Gambera, in a memoir composed before his death, proclaimed that Sacco, but not Vanzetti, took part in the South Braintree holdup. The memoir, however, must be regarded with caution, for it offers no fresh details that might corroborate its allegations. Who were the other bandits? What became of the stolen money? On these and similar questions Gambera is silent. Gambera, for all of Russell's claims, was far from being the "dominant figure" of the Gruppo Autonomo of East Boston, to which Sacco and Vanzetti belonged, still less a "close friend" of the anarchist Carlo Tresca, who adhered to a rival faction of the movement. At best his memoir may be taken as further hearsay evidence of the type that clings to every such case. That Russell should regard it as "irrefutable proof" of Sacco's guilt is a measure of his scholarly inadequacy.

Convinced of Sacco's culpability, Russell tailors his narrative to fit the case of the prosecution, highlighting evidence that tends to support a verdict of guilty and disregarding evidence that raises doubt. He takes at face value eyewitness testimony against Sacco, long since impugned by legal experts. But he argues, contrary to the evidence, that the fingerprints taken from the abandoned getaway car (which failed to match the defendants') were smudged and unusable. Russell, aware of the findings of Young and Kaiser, rejects them as a "byzantine" exercise, insisting that Vanzetti's revolver was taken from Berardelli, that four shells were discovered near his body, that bullet III was fired through Sacco's pistol, and that no substitution took place. He makes no attempt to refute contradictory evidence; he simply ignores it. What is more, he cannot distinguish between reasonable doubt, which certainly exists, and clear-cut guilt or innocence, which remains to be established.

Yet, riddled with imperfections and insecurely supported by evidence, *Sacco and Vanzetti* should be read. Drawing on recent scholarship, Russell provides a vivid portrait of the defendants and the circles in which they moved. Far from being the innocuous dreamers so often depicted by their supporters, they belonged to a movement that preached insurrectionary violence and armed retaliation against the authorities, including the use of dynamite and assassination. Such activities, they believed, were replies to the much greater violence—war, execution, torture—perpetrated by the state against the people. The greatest bomb-throwers and murderers were not the isolated rebels driven to desperation, but the military resources of every gov-

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ernment—army, militia, police, firing squad, hangman. Such was their position and the position of their mentor Luigi Galleani, a silver-tongued prophet of revolt who showered praise on every rebellious deed and glorified the perpetrators as heroes and martyrs sacrificing their lives for the oppressed.

Sacco and Vanzetti, gentle in their daily lives, lofty in their ideals, may themselves have been involved in such activities, though there is no reliable evidence to confirm this. Their explanations for being armed at the time of their arrest (Sacco occasionally worked as a night watchman, Vanzetti carried money when selling fish) are unconvincing. More likely, they carried guns because they were militants who believed in retaliatory action and who rejected docile submission to the state. At any rate, the image of "a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler," which came to define the character of the two men, calls for revision. (Interestingly, as Robert D'Attilio has shown, the phrase itself, attributed to Vanzetti before his execution, was in fact invented by the reporter who interviewed him in his cell.)

Radical activity is one thing, but robbery and murder are quite another. Were Sacco and Vanzetti guilty of the crimes for which they were condemned? Did they receive a fair trial? Were they criminals or martyrs? The case of Sacco and Vanzetti still awaits definitive treatment.

PAUL AVRICH

Paul Avrich is Distinguished Professor of History at Queens College and the Graduate School, the City University of New York. His latest book, *The Haymarket Tragedy*, has been reissued in paperback by Princeton University Press.

PHILOSOPHER OF THE FORBIDDEN

Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939
by Georges Bataille
edited by Allan Stoekl
translated by Allan Stoekl with Carl R. Lovitt and Donald M. Leslie, Jr.

(University of Minnesota Press, 271 pp., $29.50, $14.95 paper)

Georges Bataille impresses one as a peculiarly French phenomenon: a kind of underground intellectual, a shadowy *maître à penser* whose influence, despite the fragmentary and often exasperating character of his work, has not ceased to grow since his death in 1962. Bataille's work adds up to a profound dissent from optimistic views of culture as "sweetness and light," to use the definition by Matthew Arnold that set the tone for many moderns who saw culture as the secular substitute for religion. Bataille is closer to the Freud of *Civilization and Its Discontents*, but insisting, as one of the discontents, that men and societies cannot be governed by rational utilitarian principles, that they long for an experience of transcendence that depends on transgression, excess, and sacrifice.

Until now, Bataille has been known to the Frenchless reader mainly as the author of somewhat mystifying pornographic novels (notably *Story of the Eye*, his first book, published pseudonymously in 1928). *Visions of Excess* collects a number of essays and polemics from the thirties that are important in part because they announce (and often give in essence) the major works that Bataille would publish during and after the Second World War: *L'Expérience intérieure, La Part maudite, L'Érotisme, La Littérature et le mal*. The present translation may be a sign that American attention to such contemporary French thinkers as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Julia Kristeva—all of whom owe much to Bataille—has now prepared the way for a serious interest in Bataille's radically unsettling message, and in his lacerating practice of writing.

At the start of the thirties, Bataille was close to André Breton and Surrealist circles, but it was not long before he separated from them with a fracas. (Breton excommunicated him with particular virulence in the Second Surrealist Manifesto.) Bataille found Surrealism to be guilty of an excessive idealism, attempting to ennoble sexuality and the products of the unconscious, to raise them to poetic dignity. He wanted, on the contrary, to "ruin" thought and literature by way of excess, by what he called the heterogeneous and the incongruous, by excrement—that is to say, by a philosophy that based itself on the waste products of society and thought, on what society and thought cannot assimilate.

Throughout the turbulent thirties, while occupying a position as librarian at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Bataille cofounded various small reviews and ephemeral groups. He was briefly a communist, then a Trotskyite, and later he created a group called *Contre-Attaque*, which was devoted to revolutionary struggle and to antifascism. Bataille's antifascism, however, based as it was on a view of society regenerated through violence, sacrifice, and myth, came perilously close to confirming the views of its adversaries. For a brief time Bataille carried forward his thinking in *Acéphale*—a review represented, in André Masson's cover drawing, by a headless man holding a dagger and a burning heart, and with a skull between his loins, symbolizing a society that had freed itself from rational utilitarianism and from God the father. Just before the war, with Roger Caillois and Michel Leiris, he founded the "Collège de Sociologie," which had as its goal the creation of a sociology of the sacred. Following the war, finally, Bataille created the review *Critique*, which established itself as one of France's most respected journals of literature, philosophy, and the "sciences of man."

BATAILLE'S first published piece, just following World War I, was a rather unctuous devotional meditation on the Cathedral of Reims; soon thereafter he spent some time in a Benedictine monastery on the Isle of Wight. He quickly abandoned his religious commitment, however, and discovered Nietzsche (who gave him the feeling that "nothing more needed to be said"), then Freud, then Hegel. But all of his thinking remained marked precisely by what he had rejected—by the absence born of the failure of religious belief. If Bataille sometimes sounds like a particularly aggravated case of Satanism, a celebrator of black masses and inverted credos, it may be because he must prove ever and again that there are no spirits to be summoned

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from the vasty deep. Characteristically, he grouped some of his most important writings under the general heading of *La Somme athéologique:* a *Summa Atheologica* that would study the place of the spirit in a context of absence—absence of a deity, absence of all possibility of salvation, absence of any answer at all.

Still, what concerned him constantly, and what animates most of his writing, was the effort to rediscover a sense of the sacred in human and social experience: the sacred as that which is incommensurable, wholly other. Bataille refers us to the double meaning of the Latin *sacer*, evoking both the pure and hallowed, and the untouchable and taboo. In a world void of transcendence, Bataille chose to find the sacred in what utilitarian society has expelled and repressed: in dread, in sacrifice, in the erotic, in blood, sperm, and feces.

Bataille called his theory of the expelled and repressed "heterology," which he defined as "the science of the wholly other," or—in a term he sometimes uses as provocation—"scatology," the "science of excrement." What interests Bataille is that which a society and a culture devoted to appropriation cannot assimilate, and thus expel as foreign matter, which includes

> the waste products of the human body and certain analogous matter (trash, vermin, etc.); the parts of the body; persons, words, or acts having a suggestive erotic value; the various unconscious processes such as dreams or neuroses; the numerous elements or social forms that *homogeneous* society is powerless to assimilate: mobs, the warrior, aristocratic and impoverished classes, different types of violent individuals . . .

Religious thought, in its creation of a radically separate realm of the sacred, is originally concerned, according to Bataille, with the power of the heterogeneous. But religion then betrays the needs it was supposed to satisfy by reassimilating the sacred into an idealistic system and calling it the divine—making it part of appropriative, homogeneous society, refusing to deal with the impure and the taboo.

Religion is thus a failed instance of the more general experience of separation and expulsion that must preside at any creation of the sacred "otherness" that men and societies need to be fully vital. Science, based on the homogeneity of phenomena, their obedience to laws, also represses the heterogeneous. But if one resolutely takes the side of the unassimilable, of all that causes us dread, horror, revulsion—in the manner of the Marquis de Sade, a very important thinker for Bataille—one can create a true heterology, defined as "the complete reversal of the philosophical process, which ceases to be the instrument of appropriation, and now serves excretion; it introduces the demand for the violent gratifications implied by social life."

In his appeal to a renewed view of the sacred, Bataille vigorously rejected the label of mystic, applied to him by Sartre, among others. The ecstatic experience of the mystic implies a kind of divine guarantee of its transcendence, whereas Bataille insists that transcendence be simply a product of the *human* capacity for the experience of separation and waste and excess. Bataille at his most compelling is an extraordinarily powerful analyst of extreme human conditions: of sacrifice, of violence, of expenditure, of the erotic.

The "notion of expenditure" (*dépense*) is one of the key terms in Bataille's thought, first set forth in an essay included in this volume, then given its full development in *La Part maudite* ("The Cursed Share"), a treatise of universal economy, really a treatise on the uses of energy in human life, and a remarkable dissent from the concepts of utility, productivity, and rationalization that have dominated Western society and life itself for several centuries.

Bataille's critique of traditional political economy—the tradition of Adam Smith and all his progeny—rests on the startling premise that usefulness and productivity are radically insufficient bases for sociopolitical theory, as for the constitution of society itself. Society cannot be rationalized on utilitarian grounds alone. Rather, it has "an *interest* in considerable losses, in catastrophes that, *while conforming to well-defined needs*, provoke tumultuous depressions, crises of dread, and, in the final analysis, a certain orgiastic state." Societies have a need to divest, as men and women divest themselves of their clothes, and of their private, discrete selves, in erotic acts. It is worth quoting some of Bataille's meditation on the "principle of loss":

> Human activity is not entirely reducible to processes of production and conservation, and consumption must be divided into two distinct parts. The first, reducible part is represented by the use of the minimum necessary for the conservation of life and the continuation of individuals' productive activity in a given society; it is therefore a question simply of the fundamental condition of productive activity. The second part is represented by so-called unproductive expenditures: luxury, mourning, war, cults, the construction of sumptuary monuments,

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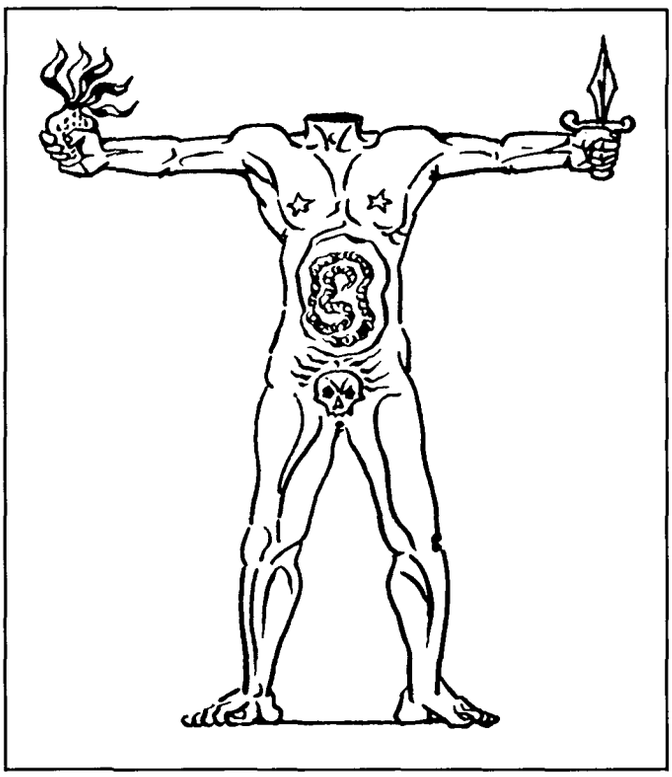
> games, spectacles, arts, perverse sexual activity (i.e., deflected from genital finality)—all these represent activities which, at least in primitive circumstances, have no end beyond themselves. . . . [These activities] constitute a group characterized by the fact that in each case the accent is placed on *loss* that must be as great as possible in order for that activity to take on its true meaning.

How are we to rationalize, for instance, people's excessive expenditures on "precious" jewelry? Cheap look-alikes cannot substitute for real jewels since they would not have the same excremental value, the same radical discontinuity with the ordinary, the same proof of loss and depletion and sacrifice. Religion, too, is built on an "operation of loss": sacrifice—including the Christian sacrifice of the Son of God—is the production of sacred things. All societies, moreover, show instances of excessive expenditures on competitive games. As for the arts, Bataille defines poetry as "creation by means of loss . . . the pursuit of inconsistent shadows that provide nothing but vertigo and rage. The poet frequently can use words only for his own loss. . . ."

Bataille's thinking here is much influenced by the anthropologist Marcel Mauss's seminal essay, "The Gift," which studies the processes of exchange and obligation in primitive societies, and calls attention to the importance of the American Indian potlatch. The potlatch can either take the form of excessive gifts of riches, presented with the intention of humiliating, defying, and obligating a rival, or the even more dramatic form of the spectacular destruction of riches. The potlatch forms the basis of aristocracy, sovereignty, honor. In modern bourgeois society, dedicated to utilitarian principles, these have ceased to exist: "Everything that was generous, orgiastic, and excessive has disappeared." Yet the utilitarian conception of man as *homo economicus* clearly is unsatisfactory as a total system for human life. And all of Bataille's thought is trained on those experiences and moments that exceed the system, that show its "deficit," that prove man's need for unproductive expenditure, sacrifice, transgression, orgy.

Bataille would never cease to develop and enrich these ideas, and in many ways the evolution of European society from the thirties through the war and into the postwar period only confirmed, in chilling ways, his perception that a utilitarian-based political economy never will satisfy man's profound needs. Following the Nazi orgy of destruction, we live in a landscape littered with examples of frenzied and bloody sacrifice. Bataille was himself a genuine antifascist who could not abide totalitarianism of any sort: his whole message is predicated on breaking restraints and transgressing limits. Yet he is undeniably fascinated by monsters—Sade, for instance, and Gilles de Rais, the original of "Blue Beard" who merrily butchered women and children and frenetically spent his wealth. "Sacrifice is the remedy to a world devoid of transcendence," Bataille writes: "the impossible is liberated through a crime, its locus now unveiled." Roger Caillois, a longtime friend and associate of Bataille, would eventually express his uneasy sense that Bataille, too, wished to "recreate a virulent and devastating version of the sacred." Controlling the social consequences of Bataille's thought is no easy matter.



ANDRÉ MASSON'S SYMBOL FOR BATAILLE'S *ACÉPHALE*

Bataille is at his most persuasive as a philosopher of the erotic, and *L'Érotisme* (which has been translated under the somewhat purple title of *Death and Sensuality*) may well be his most successful book (though really all Bataille's writings are fragments of one uninterrupted whole). The importance of eroticism, as self-reflexive, conscious sexuality, unharnessed to reproduction and in excess of the mere satisfaction of instinct, is that it provides the most common and immediate experience of excess, expenditure, and loss. Eroticism is consubstantial with transgression, with the choice to go beyond limits, to enter a domain where one risks oneself entirely. "It is possible to say of eroticism that it is the affirmation of life all the way into death," writes Bataille. The erotic is linked to death not only in the sense that sexual reproduction implies the death of the individual, but also because orgasmic pleasure ruptures the self-preservative instincts of the routine and the everyday.

Eroticism has as its "principle" the "destruction of the closed being." Bataille thus insists upon the "decisive" importance of the moment of making naked in the erotic act, since "nudity is opposed to the closed condition, that is to say, to the condition of discontinuous existence." We live as discrete, closed beings. To enter fully the erotic is to open oneself to other bodies and existences, to experience a loss of self in a larger continuum that ends in a figuration of death (what the French call "la petite mort"). Eroticism is thus "a state of communication which reveals the search for a possible continuity of being beyond closure on the self." Hence Bataille's fascination with bodily openings, and with experiences of infraction, soiling, profanation, with all that negates the restrictions and taboos that define and restrict "normal" existence.

Writing itself is for Bataille an experience of transgression and excess inseparably linked to the erotic. Writing that has fully accepted its own radical nature is incommensurable with the utilitarian: it is not accumulation, the product of work, but pure expenditure, loss. The writers whom he discusses in the work that is most nearly a piece of "literary criticism," *La Littérature et le mal* (*Literature*

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and Evil—an English translation exists), all exemplify in some manner what Baudelaire called "*la conscience dans le mal*": consciousness of and within evil, defined precisely as that which is in excess or transgressive, that refuses to serve utilitarian ends.

Most of Bataille's favored authors—Baudelaire, Emily Brontë, Michelet, William Blake, and the precursor Sade—exemplify a Romantic tradition that was indeed drawn to the idea of expenditure in various forms. One of those is, of course, the erotic, since the identification of pleasure with evil—not so much the pleasure of doing evil, but the feeling that pleasure itself is evil, *mal*, as in Proust—is the royal way to transgression. More generally, there is the "theory of debauchery," as Balzac (an author Bataille does not discuss) called it: the desire to plunge into a dissolution so profound that it alters the senses and opens up the abysses of the unknown. In its exceeding of limits, literature becomes the denial of individuality in favor of something impersonal, which Bataille calls communication.

There is nothing easy about "communication" in Bataille's sense. It requires a constant tensing of thought and language in order to transgress limits. The result is texts whose reading must be a difficult and essentially uncontrollable activity, since there is no recourse possible to a secure transcendent referent outside reading itself. Those interested in literary theory will recognize how much this view of text and reading as radically impersonal and indeterminate operations—freed from the contingent subjectivities of author and reader and cut off from any easy access to referentiality—has come to dominate in the most challenging contemporary criticism. Writing, for Bataille—as for Maurice Blanchot, in many ways a kindred spirit—is finally the impossible, the act of thinking about what cannot be thought, the transcription of what will always reveal itself to be incommensurable. To be only a man, Bataille writes in *L'Expérience intérieure*, is intolerable. "He who is not 'dying' from being only a man will never be anything but a man." This "dying" from being what one cannot escape being is very much what writing is about, indeed what writing is.

"I think in the way a whore takes off her dress," says Bataille, provoking as always, arguing for a certain casual disorder in the searching process of his thought, suggesting also that writing is a tease, that ultimately it has to do with nudity, with that search to bring the discrete body and consciousness into intimate contact with others, to breach limits, and to abolish individuality in "communication," however momentary it be, however allied to silence, and to death. Bataille's sense of the risk of thinking and writing has proved a vital message to several contemporary French philosophers and critics concerned to expose the complacencies and inadequacies of traditional humanism, its assimilation to the culture it claims to criticize, its imprisonment within certain mental and linguistic premises and categories. Bataille's thought resists assimilation to humanist principles, too, since he refuses to take comfort in desacralized man, just as he refuses traditional and comforting notions of the sacred. Finally he belongs to a small but potent anti-humanist line in French thought that includes Pascal, Sade, Céline: dissenters from facile images of the grandeur of man, restless prisoners of the human condition.

PETER BROOKS

Peter Brooks is professor of French and comparative literature at Yale University. His *Reading for the Plot* has recently been reissued in paperback by Vintage.

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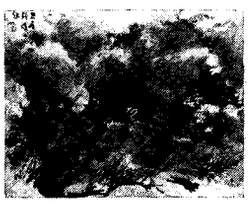

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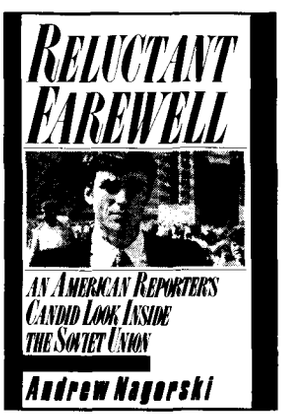

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The very model of the modern mating game.

WHERE THE BOYS ARE

BY ISA KAPP

WHEN Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States in 1831, he wrote that the American woman has scarcely passed childhood

> when she already thinks for herself, speaks with freedom and acts on her own impulse. The great scene of the world is constantly open to her view. . . . She is full of reliance on her own strength, and her confidence seems to be shared by all around her.

Yet precisely at the historical moment when she has added many more notches to her belt of accomplishments, and appropriated a large chunk of what feminists aspired to (an active role and visible presence in politics, media, and the inner offices of business), the publishing industry is doing its best to reconstruct her as a distraught and helpless figure, a dunce when faced with the central experiences of her life: love and marriage.

The recent avalanche of didactic books on choosing mates is based on the gloomy assumption that, in the pursuit of a career, the American woman has lost the ground she stood on for centuries: her desirability as a wife and her knack for choosing a husband. With natural appeal and natural aptitude allowed to slip away, her only recourses are earnest visits to "counselors," Sunday supplement tests conscientiously filled out in the sanctuary of her living room, or dogged perusal of best sellers about smart women who make foolish choices.

Observers who are not too saturnine may smile at this portrait, and point to the endless queue still making its sanguine way to the marriage bureau. One divorce for every two persons who marry still leaves 1.5 million durable marriages a year. There are 50 million married couples in America today. Though the percentage of unmarried 25- to 29-year-old women has risen from 10.5 in 1970 to 23.4 in 1983, we may be consoled to learn that by the age of 34, only 11.6 percent, and by 39, only 6.4 percent, are without spouses. Moreover, and intriguingly, by age 44, fewer are unmarried than in 1970. But Americans are an impressionable people, willing to take our cues (and even our moods) from statistics, sociologists, and journalists. When we hear that we are victims of epidemic anxiety, we become more anxious.

Certainly, for anyone who wants to be alarmed by statistics, alarming figures abound. Between 1970 and 1983 the number of couples living together but not married rose from 523,000 to 1,891,000—more than three times higher. That surely seems to indicate an enormous insecurity among people about each other, themselves, and the institution of marriage. When we read about panicky patronage of dating services and adult education courses on "Spouse Hunting," "Finding Your Mate," and "How to Deal with the Opposite Sex," the emotional plight of the young today does begin to seem poignant.

Whatever the size or significance of the yuppie audience to whom the advice books are targeted, we know that it has made a noticeable dent in the direction of our money and our mentalities. So has the other formidably expanding class in our society: the self-styled therapists, counselors, and women of uncertain experience eager to share their erotic triumphs and mortifications in print. Their books tell us much more about the two groups than they do about divining the possibilities for affinity and contentment in marriage.

The doctors (Ph.D.s) Connell Cowan and Melvyn Kinder have addressed *Smart Women / Foolish Choices* to the kind of petitioner for advice who frequents their clinic in Beverly Hills, California. She is "career-oriented and actively involved in her personal development. She strives for strong identity as a woman and as a person." That is to say, her self-engrossed language and notions have been liberally doused (as have those of the authors) in the after-splash of feminism. She is somewhere between 28 and 40, so enjoys neither the innocence of youth nor the tolerance of age. She has been, like her male counterpart, long weaned from the adaptability of family life by years of foraging for degrees and high-salaried jobs in areas where it takes considerable nerve and capability to tread. But when this prepossessing woman's fancy turns to thoughts of matrimony, warn the writers, she is bound to make a terrible mistake.

Lest she blame herself, Cowan and Kinder range over those unavoidable accidents of background that undermine her chances for prudence—chief among them, the possession of parents. If her father, for example, was overpowering, possessive, unresponsive, or just missing; her mother helpless, withdrawn, dependent, or (therapy's ubiquitous accusation) manipulative—a daughter might well find herself magnetized by "three basic types of rats: the Elusive Lover, the Don Juan and the Married Rat." If, on the other hand, she should be lucky enough to fall for a decent fellow, she is likely to frighten him by showing desperation or otherwise conducting herself in a fashion that sends him scurrying off.

However absurd its language or schematic its form, each of the books discussed here contains some kernel of realism. Somewhere no doubt, at any given moment, a smart woman is stooping to follies located by Cowan and Kinder. Among similar books, perhaps this one has been lingering high on the best-seller list because it is saturated with goodwill and the ardent hope of steering women toward happy marriage. The obvious question is: Does forewarned mean forearmed?

How to Make a Man Fall in Love with You, written in pulp terminology by a volunteer of small conscience and dubious IQ (a contributor to *Playgirl* and *Savvy*), affects wild optimism:

Smart Women/Foolish Choices by Dr. Connell Cowan and Dr. Melvyn Kinder (Clarkson N. Potter, 204 pp., $14.95)

Women Who Love Too Much by Robin Norwood (Tarcher/St. Martin's Press, 266 pp., $14.95)

Sexual Choice by Heather Trexler Remoff (E.P. Dutton, 219 pp., $15.95)

Sex Etiquette by Marilyn Hamel (Dell/Delacorte Press, 277 pp., $13.95, $3.95 paper)

How to Make a Man Fall in Love with You by Tracy Cabot (Dell, 182 pp., $5.95)

A Return to Romance by Michael Morgenstern (Harper & Row, 170 pp., $10)

Isa Kapp is writing a book about love and marriage in the middle classes.

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> The techniques . . . work. I know because they have worked for me and everyone else who has tried them—even women who thought love had passed them by. Because I had these insights and learned these techniques, I was ready for a real relationship when I met the right man. I knew what to do.

Nevertheless it submits the obligatory list of "Ten Classic Bastard Types" (the Guru, the Cripple, the Supervisor, the Patient, the Fairy Godfather, and so on) with a few "commonsense rules" for self-protection: for example, interviewing ex-wives and former lovers of your new friend. Such previews of what is in store, like the prevalent assumption that fine women are irresistibly drawn to men who are "mean and lean" ("dark" may also be fraught with peril), don't alleviate the anxieties of the young, but cut a nasty edge onto their fantasies. Readers of these volumes can find a wide-ranging grasp of everything they should *not* feel or expect, and an almost blank slate for what they should.

THE ultimate lesson of *Smart Women / Foolish Choices* is, indeed, that female high achievers must lower their marital expectations. With apparently kind intentions, the authors flatly inform their readers that

> it is our belief that the difficulty today is not only that there are too few men, but there is a shortage at the top. By "top," we mean the relatively small percentage of men who are both materially successful and have attractive personalities, and are therefore universally desirable. . . . We believe that given all these factors, smart women need to become more realistic in their expectations if they want to form close long-term relationships with men.

"Long-term relationships"! Literal marriage in the 1980s must seem to Cowan and Kinder a nearly unattainable state of grace. Still, they end on a more hopeful note, suggesting a sharp lookout for "diamonds in the rough," men who do not shine at first sight but will prove to be of sterling quality.

To call this cold comfort is not to deny it a grain of pertinence, or to imply that realism plays no part in choosing one's mate. But can such narrow pragmatic terms be the only ones in which counselors are able to envision this most universal of subjects? A thousand questions remain unasked. Do we recognize a congenial human configuration when we see one? Do we know what temperamental attunement is? Have we some inkling of what we require from one another, what we genuinely admire? Could we answer the question, "What impression does he make"? In other words, do we have some sense of the kind of person we could love?

Mysteriously enough, love rarely makes its appearance in these pages (unless in pathological manifestations like "love addict" or, in *Women Who Love Too Much*, "the thrilling possibility of righting old wrongs . . . gaining withheld approval"). Nor does any thought like Ortega y Gasset's observation in *On Love* that "in living together with our fellow man, nothing interests us as much as discovering what is his range of values, his system of preference, for this constitutes the ultimate root of his being and the source of his character." These formal but crucial phrases are as inconceivable to the writers being reviewed as if they issued from the universe next door. Yet how can their content be absent from the consideration of a lifelong companion? If those who want to marry cannot be satisfied in such matters, what indeed can they demand for themselves?

NOT ONLY do the guidebooks leave scant space for abstract speculation, but they also dispense easily with disturbing questions of taste or moral scruples. Even Cowan and Kinder, otherwise regular Gibraltars of respectability, lean toward the stirrings of post-1960s laxity, and sneak in a cozy example of an "ideal couple" who regularly visit an orgy retreat so that the husband may experience sexual variety.

Indeed, for the women writers, who aim to be brassy and "savvy," there are absolutely no holds barred. *Sex Etiquette* is a compendium of raunchy, hard-boiled prescriptions for every eventuality in the history of courtship, from stratagems for meeting men (laundromats are featured) to escaping from them if you suddenly chance to recoil nine-tenths of the way toward intimacy. (Muse aloud, "Gee, I wish the reports were back from the gynecologists' lab.") Imaginary episodes veer from unlikely disasters to extravagant encouragement. "Keep him percolating throughout cocktails, stuffed squab and peaches flambé. Breathe naughty intentions in his ear, slide your stockinged foot beguilingly up his trouser leg during dinner." The author, Marilyn Hamel, another Californian accustomed to congested emotional traffic, becomes unimaginably gross in the private territory of the bedroom. Garish physicalities—dental hygiene, unkempt hair, zippers, wet-spots—pop up like gargoyles while the pleasure of sex, in real life a function of the imagination, freezes.

Heather Remoff, with a Ph.D. in anthropology and a couple of quotations from Darwin's *Descent of Man*, lays claim to scholarly credentials, and her recommendations, bolstered by biological imperatives, sprout in healthier air than Ms. Hamel's. *Sexual Choice* is no more than another book of instruction to women on attaining "the objects of their attraction." The optimistic writer boosts women's morale by assuring them that their hormonal incentive to produce offspring renders them more decisive and selective than men in choosing mates. She pretty well guarantees that they will be drawn to partners with generous natures and potentially good incomes. To be on the safe side, however, she painstakingly maps out, in dismal jargon, a number of procedures that may expedite their goals: "forthright pursuit," "situational manipulation," and "veto power." She also offers a few casual clues on the dynamics of fascination: "every woman responds to a man whose looks correspond to her particular stereotype of power."

The way we talk about ourselves eventually changes us, and in the impoverished language of these books the image of men and women, love and sex, is spoiling like uncared-for lettuce. Robin Norwood, the most intelligent and responsible of these authors, comments in

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Women Who Love Too Much that the media give us few examples of mature love or healthy communication. The soap-opera world overflows with scenes of jealousy, revenge, exploitation, and deception. "Everything," she points out, "happens in context, including the way we love."

To be sure; and book publishing, counseling, and therapy are part of the same context—exaggerating our susceptibilities, glamorizing our weaknesses, and persuading us that we need professional guidelines on feelings and responses for which we are all endowed with natural capabilities. Between the aggrandizement of the advice industry and the gullibility of readers, many men and women have come to believe that they don't know whom they like or who likes them, and that they cannot approach each other without the aid of borrowed blandishments. They have traded pride and confidence for a handful of "professional expertise."

Even the most benign book in this lot, *A Return to Romance*, flounders in embarrassment when it gets to the language of concrete suggestion. Michael Morgenstern, an observant young lawyer with a

Clayfeld's Operatic Debut

Clayfeld considered Rita the most gifted student
he had taught in years
at Greensville University where Clayfeld's
basic sculpture course
in structure and material was famous
in the dorms as BONES AND STONES.
"You have the touch," Clayfeld assured her
when her confidence was down
one sleeting afternoon as they were in his studio
discussing her rough sketches
for a life-size sculpture of herself.
Tears came to Rita's eyes;
"I only told him that his student singers
are inspired by him," she said,
"and then Professor Hornblow propositioned me."
Fire springing to his cheeks,
Clayfeld cried out, "My God, he's older than I am!"
Professor Hornblow was contrite
when Clayfeld icily confronted him, pleading
he would reform if Clayfeld promised
not to file a sexual harassment charge.
"I've suffered punishment enough,"
he said, "just knowing what I know about myself."
To his surprise, Clayfeld then swore
he would say nothing to the dean if Hornblow
offered him the part
of Mephistopheles in *Faust* to be premiered
at Greensville in the spring.
"I know the role by heart," Clayfeld, amused,
could hear himself proclaim, and so
the two of them shook hands to seal the compact
that began their partnership.
Clayfeld's interpretation of the character
was that, no less than aged Faust,
desire for lasting youth consumed the Devil's heart;
desire for more desire
had poisoned Satan's love for endless love
into its jealous opposite.
Clayfeld on stage would stare past Faust,
twirling his waxed mustachios,
flashing his *you must pay the rent* wide grin
at every woman in his view—
each face, he thought, was beautiful if ever
he could know her well enough—
but sympathetic longing swelled so thick
in Clayfeld's throat,
his throbbing voice took on a dark vibrato
trembling from his bones,
that vindicated Hornblow's bargain giving him
the chance to sing the part.
"We all contain a world of hidden selves
demanding birth; the sculptor must
release them into light," Clayfeld espoused
to Rita much more formally
than he had planned, stiffly hugging her farewell
that humid graduation day.
"I hope in time you will be proud of what
I've learned from you," she said,
and vanished with her parents in the crowd.
"A chauvinist Pygmalion
is what I am," Clayfeld tried to cheer himself,
but he remained dejected, working
through the summer on a statue of his daughter
sitting on a rock, her weight
thrown back upon her thin, unsteady arms,
her face upturned to catch the sun.
"Her features could be anyone's," hissed Clayfeld to himself
as Hornblow's tenor voice
accompanied his knocking at the door
of Clayfeld's dusty studio.
"Me voici!" Clayfeld mellifluously greeted him
as usual with mockery.
But fleshier than he remembered her, a shawl
around her belly and her shoulders
like a hunched owl's wings disturbed for flight,
Rita appeared at Hornblow's side:
"We wanted you to be the first to know;
we ask your blessing," Rita said.
Clayfeld could not complete the statue
of his daughter, though he tried
until October when the flailing trees,
ablaze, revealed their branches
to the wind, and Clayfeld then decided with relief
that he, as Mephistopheles,
cast out and wailing on the earth, at best could ease
his own disfigured mind
by leaving her still struggling to find shape, and bent
just like the twisted slaves
of Michelangelo, who, pushing out in labor from
confining stone, needing to laugh
or groan or sing, seem puzzled to be leaving home,
their first, white, silent element.

Robert Pack

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wholesome outlook, reminds us that many in both genders feel ill at ease in our era of sexual franchise, and have no desire to do or say everything that is now permissible. He urges that we go back to the graces of old-fashioned courtship—formality, patience, gallantry, reserve. But we may be in essential agreement with him and still wince at invocations of remembered high school proms and presentations of a single rose as the road to recapturing the poetry the younger generation has lost.

We are all subject to the charm and enchantment other human beings exert upon us. Yet most of us are tongue-tied, even to ourselves, about this best of all possible experiences. We can be eloquent and precise enough when we savor food, art, poetry, and personality, but when it comes to love and marriage we are lummoxes. If moral, we sound preachy; if romantic, sentimental; if optimistic, insincere or roseate; if speculative, presumptuous and unconvincing.

How strange it is that marriage—the sole institution that promises a fulfilling, stable life at a time of demographic upheavals and loosened roots, and that lures us to try it again and again—is so hard to talk about in a favorable or appreciative way. We are only garrulous about its oddities and disappointments. We perk up at a sophisticated joke, a cynical turn of phrase, a lingering fleck of feminist hostility. But we don't quite know how to admit our hope that here is one of our most solid chances for both self-expression and community, both ambition and pleasure. It is hard to imagine or convey an experience of such compass, particularly one in which sensible considerations don't have as much influence as elusive forces that are as inconsistent and unpredictable as intuition and luck. In that unknown terrain, advice books cannot help. No one else can envision or articulate our individual prospects.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

plastic flamingos. He notes without comment Jackson's assertion that suburbanization has produced a weakened sense of community and a particular neglect of the inner city's poor minorities.

Why is it that the suburbs still inspire such derision by intellectuals? Tens of millions of households, working-class and up, have chosen to live in detached houses in suburban environments instead of in metropolitan areas. And living in the suburbs, they choose to spend their income in all sorts of ways that they apparently enjoy, even if Geist, Jackson, and Lukas think they are tacky.

Lukas's review reads like something that might have been written in the mid-1950s, when massive suburbanization was new and urban intellectuals couldn't come to terms with it. To reject the suburbs in 1986 is to reject an enormous chunk of American society.

HARVEY M. CHOLDIN
Department of Sociology
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

ARABS AND VIOLENCE

To the editors:

As a reader who has come to value the views and tone of THE NEW REPUBLIC, I was shocked by the insensitive racial slur of M.P.'s Palm Beach Diarist (March 10), which states that "nonviolence is so foreign to the political culture of the Arabs generally and of the Palestinians particularly. It is a failure of the collective imagination for which no one is to blame."

I find the remark deeply anti-Semitic (yes, Arabs are Semites too), and an offensive generalization. Ask yourself what would be the impression left by such a remark were the word "Jews" substituted for "Arabs," regardless of one's political viewpoint. Such writing does nothing to further the Zionist cause that your correspondent clearly espouses.

MICHAEL BINYON
The Times of London
Washington, D.C.

M.P. replies:

Will Mr. Binyon provide some evidence indicating that nonviolence is not foreign to the political culture of the Arabs?

BULLITT PROOF

To the editors:

In your report of the results of the "bad character judgment" contest (Notebook, March 17), it's stated that Joseph E. Davies was our first ambassador to the Soviet Union. This is incorrect. Our first ambassador was William C. Bullitt, who was appointed by President Roosevelt in late 1933, and who served in that post from 1934 to 1936.

ROBERT HECKERT
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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CAMBRIDGE DIARIST

Out of Line

SOMEONE I CARE ABOUT a lot has put an *affiche* on the door to her office at the local university announcing: "Yes, Martin Peretz is an old and beloved friend. No, I am not responsible for his politics." This disclaimer is not exactly like one of those "I am no longer responsible for the debts of my spouse (or child or partner) . . ." ads we used to see in the newspapers. But, occasioned by the TNR editorial endorsing aid to the *contras* (March 24), it has something of the same ring. And, to be truthful, our view of this issue is something my wife and at least one of my children have been disclaiming quite vigorously whenever the topic of Nicaragua has come up lately—certainly when it has come up in my presence. This is a generally tolerant community, but it does go into fits of the witches' craze. Two years ago you were likely to be assaulted at a cocktail party if you didn't support the nuclear freeze and believe in its intellectual assumption, put forward by neighborhood *penseurs* Randall Forsberg and Helen Caldicott, that otherwise the world was faced with the absolute and mathematical certainty of atomic war. Now it's backing *contra* aid that makes you a pariah and an embarrassment to your kids at school.

THE ARGUMENT is usually couched first in terms of the bona fides of the *contras* as democrats. The ample evidence that many of them are democrats, that even those fighting under the most compromised leadership are aggrieved peasants, and that the insurrection generally has a populist rather than an oligarchic base is simply denied. Robert Leiken's proposal ("Reform the Contras," TNR, March 31) for a systematic democratic reform of the *contras* as a component of American aid, which was also the core of a *New York Times* statement of March 16 signed by yours truly and TNR's literary editor and implicit in our editorial (and explicitly urged in our pages many times before), does not convince or console the guardians of local liberalism. There is, then, something involved here other than their hatred of Adolfo Calero and Enrique Bermudez, Somoza henchmen whose names most of them can hardly distinguish from Emiliano Zapata and Sancho Panza. For many, and their numbers and sway should not be underestimated, Nicaragua remains the revolutionary idyll, filling the vast emotional void created by the sequential disenchantments with the Soviet Union, People's China, Fidelista Cuba, and Democratic Vietnam. Despite what the egregious Pat Buchanan says, however, most opponents of *contra* aid are not really partisans of Sandinismo at all. But they'd rather be wrong with Ortega, a man they don't know, than right with Ronald Reagan, a man they feel they know oh, so well. The president, of course, is intellectually sloppy and morally careless. This makes him easy to ridicule. So even when he does something genuinely progressive, the cosmopolitans begrudge him and the country his achievement. And when he wants to embark on a risky course, they won't follow. That's understandable, but why do they deny that not embarking on the risky course also poses great perils?

THIS PRESIDENT is given to awful rhetorical excess, particularly when he talks about the Sandinistas. But his hyperbole is pretty much like that of his opponents when talking about the *contras*. Accusing the administration of McCarthyism is just another excessive (and largely false) tactic in the political wars. God knows, many of your friends and mine regularly accuse the Reaganites of being apologists for fascism. With what credentials, then, do they claim standing as targets of McCarthyism? This accusation, now routinely hurled by left and right, is usually a sign of desperation. In this case, it is the desperation of the Democrats who—if you'll remember Senator Chris Dodd's April 19, 1983, reply to Reagan's address to Congress on the administration's Central America policy—thought the Salvadoran guerrillas to be on the right side of history and Napoleón Duarte on the wrong. How far the party and the country have come since then. I won't be surprised if something comparable happens over Nicaragua. In fact, it may already have begun: the aforementioned *Times* statement also carries the signatures of five people who were central to the making of foreign and defense policy under Jimmy Carter. It is my sense that much of the anger of the anti-aid liberals against the pro-aid liberals (sturdy liberals like Claude Pepper and Dante Fascell) derives from the fact that the opponents, wary though they are of the administration's strategy, gave no strategy themselves. What they call their strategy is nothing more than an attitude.

A STUDENT OF MINE has done a senior thesis on the Israeli soldiers' protest movement during the Lebanon war. This was a movement with which I, unlike my student, was not sympathetic. Still, I learned a lot from his research and from his insights. One postscript to that war has, as far as I can tell, received no attention in the U.S. You may remember that, as the Israelis had Beirut under siege, there was a rash of army resignations and of refusals to obey orders. What happens to soldiers and officers who behave that way? They are usually dismissed, or worse. One thing is certain: they're not likely to figure prominently in the military again, at least not in our country, if the experience in Vietnam is an index of these matters. Not so in Israel. To be sure, the most prominent protester, Colonel Eli Geva, is still on the outs, kept there by a personal fixation of the chief of staff. But a recent article in *Ha'aretz* reports that all the other refusers and resigners have been returned to their units, some after punishment. One dismissed officer has been restored to an important position in the reserves, the backbone of the Israeli defense. Another senior officer who had tangled publicly with the minister of defense has been promoted one rank and been advanced in his responsibilities. Still another senior officer who had resigned during the fighting has been promoted to general. Is this not unusual? I think it's positively exhilarating. Here is a society that lives under continuous siege and yet takes ethical dissent in stride. In Beirut in the summer of 1982, in fact, there were discussions arranged among army personnel and led by philosophers and political scientists about the morality of what they might be called upon to do. Now those who refused to do it are returned by the army, not only to their comrades but to command. It is evidence of Israel's inner fortitude, if also a prerequisite of its external strength. In that society even those who stepped out of line when their country was in extremity and at war are less stigmatized than those who step out of line in Cambridge on aid to the *contras*.

M.P.

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The ring shown features
a quality diamond of 2.66 carats.

A QUALITY DIAMOND OF A CARAT OR MORE.
A FIRE RARELY SEEN.

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